



Frederick Bird Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103695
Local Authority Coventry
Inspection number 298753
Inspection dates 14–15 December 2006
Reporting inspector Marion Wallace

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Swan Lane
School category	Community		Coventry
Age range of pupils	3–11		CV2 4QQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	024 76221920
Number on roll (school)	629	Fax number	024 76228026
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Steven Greenall
		Headteacher	Christine Lockwood
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2004		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 14–15 December 2006	Inspection number 298753
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Frederick Bird is a very large primary school. It is situated in a disadvantaged inner city community. The main ethnic groups of pupils within the school are White British, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African. A high percentage of pupils speak English as an additional language and many enter the school not speaking English. The school caters for an increasing number of pupils who are refugees from Somalia and migrant workers from countries within the European Union. These include families from Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. There are 46 different languages spoken; this represents just under two thirds of the school. Just under a half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and over a quarter of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. The number of pupils with statements of special educational need is below the national average. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is very low. A high percentage of pupils enter or leave the school at different times of the school year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This was an underachieving school which has come out of a category. It is now good school with some outstanding features, such as the leadership of the headteacher. The school provides a calm and secure environment. It works well to ensure that its pupils, who come from a wide range of backgrounds and who have a wide range of learning needs, are successful. All are respected and valued and consequently pupils feel safe and they have a positive attitude to their work. They all enjoy the activities offered because this is a very caring community. Pupils are challenged to do their best. This view is supported by parents and pupils.

The school has successfully overcome many barriers to raising standards and demonstrates good capacity to improve further. This is because there is good leadership and management and outstanding leadership of the headteacher which are helping it to improve at a good rate. Leaders identify a clear direction and the outstanding quality of the day to day care helps pupils meet their targets. High quality monitoring ensures pupils stay on track. For example, the 2006 national test results showed the school to be meeting its challenging targets for improving standards and pupils' achievement. Good teaching results in pupils achieving well and reaching the expected levels by the time they leave Year 6. Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, with some good features. Although the children make steady progress most of them attain well below the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. On a few occasions in Reception, children are not always challenged enough when they select their own activities. Although outdoor play provision in the Foundation Stage has improved some aspects of it are not as good as the rest of the school. Attendance of Foundation Stage children is unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 2, standards are below average, and they are broadly in line by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. Effective support for pupils who join the school during term time ensures they are quickly integrated and make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak very little English also make good progress because of the additional support they receive. Preparation for future economic well-being is good, and pupils learn to become responsible members of the community. However, they are not sufficiently involved in the process of checking their own progress.

The curriculum is good because it is carefully adapted to the particular needs of the pupils. The quality of the care, guidance and support the school provides is good and day to day care is outstanding because relationships are very strong. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils have a good understanding about how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Learning mentors make a significant contribution to personal development. Pupils know they are always available to help them sort out any problems.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen provision in the Foundation Stage by developing the outdoor area and encourage better attendance.

- Now that pupils know their learning targets very well, provide more opportunities for them to assess the quality of their own work so that they can recognise the steps needed to reach those targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In 2006, Year 6 pupils made exceptional progress from their starting point in Year 2. In the Year 6 national tests, results in 2005 were well below average. However, in 2006, the results improved markedly. From very low starting points on entry to school pupils reached average standards in English and mathematics and broadly average standards in science.

Progress is good in Years 1 and 2. In the 2005 tests at the end of Year 2, standards were well below average. In 2006, the results improved to below average. Reading remained well below but writing and mathematics improved from well below to below average.

Children achieve soundly in the Foundation Stage making satisfactory gains in their learning. Although standards are well below the expected levels by the time they start Year 1, a small minority of children meet or exceed the expected levels. Standards are especially low in communication, language and literacy on entry to Year 1 because a high percentage of children have very limited English speaking skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The calm, supportive but challenging ethos of the school promotes pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school celebrates cultural diversity well, for example by ensuring the different religious festivals of the pupils are celebrated.

Children settle well in the Foundation Stage; they work and play well together. Older pupils confidently express their opinions. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and attitudes and consequently pupils behave well, are polite and helpful.

Good efforts by the school ensure that attendance is steadily improving. It is now good for Years 5 and 6. However, the school correctly identifies that more needs to be done to improve the unsatisfactory attendance of children in the Foundation Stage.

Pupils make good contributions to the local and wider community, for example by raising money for charities. Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously and they are pro-active in reflecting and acting upon pupils' views. Pupils have a good knowledge about how to keep themselves safe. They learn to recognise and deal with bullying and say 'We do not have much bullying now, we know who to tell teachers always deal with it quickly'. Pupils have a good understanding about how to stay healthy and they are proud of their 'healthy tuck shop'. Many lunch boxes, however, do not contain a healthy food balance. They benefit from clubs such

as steel pans and the many trips such as the residential trip to Wales. These things help pupils develop good social skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Nearly all lessons provide a good level of challenge for all pupils. Planning is good and lessons have a clear focus. A strength across the school is the contribution made to pupils' learning by teaching assistants. They are very well deployed and work effectively with pupils who have limited English language skills. As a result, these pupils make good progress. Electronic whiteboards are used well to engage pupils' attention and to consolidate learning. Many activities are interesting and pupils think that learning is fun. Lessons are adapted well to ensure that new or key vocabulary is explained, particularly for those pupils with limited English. In a few lessons pupils find it difficult to concentrate because explanations are not clear enough. Although teachers' questioning skills are generally good, on a few occasions teachers do not give pupils enough time to respond and think about ideas being presented to them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is planned well and evaluated carefully and consequently pupils enjoy their work. In Years 1 to 6 opportunities for improving literacy and numeracy skills are planned for systematically and this contributes to the good gains pupils make in their learning. Pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are used well to support learning in all subjects. In the Foundation Stage it is matched appropriately to children's needs but the lack of a wide range of resources for the outdoor area limits provision. There is good provision for pupils' personal development and visits are used very well to enhance learning; for example, the Young Shakespeare Company visited the school and this experience was used well in lessons. Good use is made of the local environment and there are well established links with the community to boost pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Very strong relationships exist throughout the school ensuring pupils receive outstanding day to day care. For example, the school provides transport for pupils to attend after school clubs where there are difficulties because their parents are working. The school is vigilant about ensuring pupils' safety and security. Effective arrangements are in place for safeguarding all groups of pupils and the quality of care for vulnerable pupils is good. In the Foundation Stage good induction procedures ensure that pupils settle quickly. Pastoral and academic support and guidance are very well led by staff.

Support for academic development is good. Pupils are set challenging class and individual targets and they know their targets very well. There are not enough opportunities, however, for pupils to assess the quality of their own work to enable them to recognise the steps needed to reach those targets. Pupils who have English as an additional language, many of whom join different year groups at various times of the year, receive outstanding support and, consequently, they are very well integrated into the school and they achieve well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher is well supported by the highly effective deputy headteacher and is an excellent role model. She has outstanding interpersonal skills and utilises staff strengths well in the drive for improved achievement and standards. The headteacher has created a very effective team which shares a common purpose. Good quality training has ensured that the school's self-evaluation is robust and accurate. Effective improvements have been made in all areas identified in the previous report. Parents are very satisfied with all aspects of the school's work.

Middle managers are clear about their responsibilities in raising achievement and effectively evaluate their work. However, the transition from the Foundation Stage to Year 1 is less well developed and the school rightly recognises this as being a priority area for development. Class teachers understand areas that need to be improved and all have common approaches to managing pupils and tracking their progress. English, mathematics and science are well coordinated by members of the senior management team who use their experience and expertise very effectively to raise standards in these subjects. The senior management team ensure new staff receive a very good induction to the school. The appointment of staff has significantly improved the quality of care and teaching within the school.

The governors contribute well to the self-evaluation and have a clear understanding of how well the pupils are progressing. They challenge the leadership team effectively and also provide good support.

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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?	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
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	3
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?	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?	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?	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?	2
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

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers, coming to your assembly and visiting your lessons. Frederick Bird is a good school with some outstanding features.

These are the things we liked most about your school.

- Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and to help you make good progress.
- You are all treated equally and valued for what you can do.
- You are cared for very well by all adults who work in the school.
- You learn to work and respect each other well and you all feel safe.
- You enjoy school and the activities, including the trips and visits to places like the Herbert Museum.
- Your headteacher leads the school very well and your teachers help you realise the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and being part of the school community.
- To make things even better we have asked the school to:
 - ensure you all learn to become more involved in checking how well you are progressing with your work
 - improve the outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage
 - improve the attendance of children in the Foundation Stage.