

# Cotteridge Junior and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103190
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	308243
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew McDowall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	377
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Blood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diana James
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Breedon Road Birmingham B30 2HT
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4642865
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4642295

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger-than-average school. It serves an area where levels of socio-economic status vary considerably. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups attending the school is greater than the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the number with English as an additional language is broadly average. The number of pupils who leave and join the school at different times in any one year is greater than in most schools. Many pupils joining the school stay for only a short time. The headteacher had been in post for five terms at the time of the inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

There are four main reasons why this is a good and improving school. The drive of the new headteacher to continually raise standards is the first. The second is the strong focus on teamwork that has established common goals in the school. The third reason is the very good provision for the considerable number of vulnerable pupils who attend the school. The final factor is the positive effect the good teaching and rich and engaging curriculum are having on pupils' personal development and achievement.

From starting points that are generally just below those found nationally, the pupils make good progress during their time in the school. Standards across the school are rising and, by Year 6, they are above average. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education and for later life. Not enough is expected of the higher-attaining pupils in Key Stage 1. Consequently, the number of pupils who reach the higher levels in all subjects by the end of Year 2 is below average.

The school does much to foster good personal development. The pupils thoroughly enjoy school and their attendance and punctuality are both good. The rich curriculum and good teaching are successful in capturing their interest. Consequently, behaviour is good and pupils are well motivated. They work well together and enjoy good relations with each other and with the staff. Teachers are good at letting the pupils know what they are going to learn at the start of lessons. However, the objectives of the lessons are rarely referred to when the work is marked. As a result, pupils do not always know if they have reached their targets or achieved the objective of the lesson.

The many school clubs and good opportunities for exercise promote a good understanding of how to stay healthy. Vulnerable pupils and those new to the school are very well cared for. This enables these pupils to settle quickly and start to make progress in their social and academic development. This high quality of pastoral care enables all pupils to feel safe and supported in school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good and provides many opportunities for the pupils to participate in both the school and the wider community.

The leadership team is providing very clear direction for the school. The headteacher and school governors have a shared vision and the school has real momentum. The school has excellent links with a range of other agencies to ensure pupils receive the care and support they need. The senior leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and are bringing about good improvement. Some of the management systems are not sharp enough to promote outstanding progress because insufficient focus is given to identifying the progress pupils are making in lessons or in their work. The strong teamwork and the track record for improvement, along with the commitment of the staff, indicate a good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

A lively curriculum and good teaching ensure children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. They make good progress in all areas of learning. Recent improvements to the way early reading is taught are paying dividends. The children in the Reception classes can already recognise and use many letter sounds. The children are very well cared for and, consequently, they settle quickly and enjoy being at school with their friends. Those who are vulnerable are

quickly identified and receive good support. Occasionally, too much attention to work in small groups leads to missed opportunities to reinforce learning in the activities the children have chosen for themselves.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise expectations of the higher-attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 in order to increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in all subjects by the end of Year 2.
- Improve the quality of marking by ensuring it makes more reference to the learning objectives of the lesson and the pupils' targets.
- Monitor standards and progress more closely when undertaking such activities as lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

When they start at the school, most pupils have skills and abilities that are just below the levels expected nationally, but a significant number have poor skills in aspects of language and communication. Pupils make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage and, by the time they move to Year 1, about three quarters of them reach the levels expected of pupils of this age. In recent years, progress in Years 1 and 2 has been slow. The school has been very effective in addressing this, and progress in these year groups is now satisfactory and improving very rapidly. Standards in Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with those found nationally.

Standards in Key Stage 2 are rising and are above those reached by pupils nationally. They are best in mathematics and science, where high proportions of the pupils reach the higher Level 5. Progress in this key stage is outstanding in mathematics and science but only good in English owing to less rapid progress in writing. Vulnerable pupils, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They are very proud of their achievements and respond enthusiastically to the stimulating curriculum. Behaviour throughout the school is good, although there are isolated incidents of challenging behaviour. These are dealt with effectively in class but not always when arising from conflict in the playtime football area. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils are self-confident and are actively involved in the local community. The school council has been actively involved in improving the school as well as directing efforts to raise money for numerous charities both at home and abroad. Within the school community, pupils make a good contribution to the learning of others by collaborating well and listening to each other. Pupils say they feel safe in school and have a clear understanding of what to do if others endanger their safety. They are confident that any incident will be dealt with effectively. Pupils respond well to the encouragement from the school to adopt healthy lifestyles. They exercise regularly during the school week and many take advantage of healthy eating options, such as fruit at break-time.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching is lively and engaging. A particular strength is the good quality of relationships that exist between adults and pupils, creating a positive climate where all learners feel valued. This is especially true in music, where pupils participate enthusiastically, reaching impressive levels in both group and solo performances. Occasional poor behaviour is well managed so that learners are quickly back on track. Pupils are often encouraged to think creatively and they enjoy the increasing independence they are given.

The high quality of support from teaching assistants and mentors ensures that those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress at a good rate. Occasionally, the expectations of what the most able pupils can do in lessons are too low and fail to offer the challenge these pupils need.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The rich and stimulating curriculum makes a good contribution to the pupils' academic progress and personal development. A high priority is given to English, mathematics and information and communication technology. The newly established computer centre is having a positive effect on the curriculum. The staff review and enrich the learning activities to suit the needs of individuals and local circumstances. For example, partnership with the Welsh National Opera and visiting staff from Birmingham Art Gallery produced high quality work from pupils. The curriculum provides exciting learning opportunities and the school is actively developing the links between subjects. The various after-school clubs are well attended by pupils and make an important contribution to self-confidence and enjoyment. The activities include drama, choir, art and many kinds of sport. Residential visits and specialists working in school also enhance the achievement and personal development of pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The pastoral care provided by the school is very good. Those pupils at highest risk are especially well cared for, benefiting from the dedicated support of a very effective learning mentor. Staff know the pupils very well and go to great lengths to make sure that they all have an equal chance of success. Arrangements to ensure the safeguarding of pupils are secure.

Pupils are set challenging targets and regular assessment ensures their progress towards them is carefully monitored. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities respond well to their learning targets. Because targets are not always made clear enough to the pupils, some do not have a clear and precise understanding of how to improve their work. The detailed marking of the 'Big Writing' is helping pupils understand how to improve but such clear guidance on how to develop their work is not evident in all subjects.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher is having a positive impact on the school. She has acted decisively to improve the falling standards in Key Stage 1. Together with the senior leadership team, she has developed good systems to check on the progress pupils are making. This has raised expectations of what pupils can do and is a major contributor to the improving standards across the school. The quality of teaching is regularly monitored and evaluated and is improving because of the support and training the staff are receiving. However, the way in which pupils' progress is assessed in lessons and through the scrutiny of their work is not sharp enough to clearly identify where short-term progress is not as good as it should be.

The school's leaders have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and have set appropriate priorities for improvement. However, some of the planning for improvement lacks detail regarding how the school will monitor and measure its own success. Targets for pupils' achievement are challenging and are continually reviewed. The governors have a good working knowledge of the school and they provide good support and challenge to the headteacher.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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

19 October 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Cotteridge Junior and Infant School, Birmingham B30 2HT

I would like to say a big thank you to you all for being so welcoming when we visited your school recently. Like you, we think you go to a good school.

There are many good things to report. You told us you really enjoy school and we were very pleased to see how well behaved you were in school. There are sometimes problems in the playground football area when some of you can be too rough. You could help by working out a way to make sure this doesn't happen in the future. Your attendance is good and you come to school on time. Keep it up!

Because the staff at the school are all working very hard, you are making good progress in your work. Those of you in the older classes do particularly well in mathematics and science but writing is not quite as good. You can all help by learning your targets and remembering them whenever you are asked to write anything.

Your teachers are good and they plan interesting things for you to do. Your singing is terrific and we were pleased to see both boys and girls attending the choir. Your school provides you with lots of clubs and you go on good visits. We were also pleased to see so many of you bringing healthy food to school. Perhaps some of you could do a little better in this.

We have asked the staff and governors to do three things to help your school improve. The first is to help those of you who find work easy to do better, particularly in Years 1 and 2. The second is to improve the way your work is marked so that you know when you have achieved the learning objectives of the lesson. Finally, we have asked the school to look more closely at the progress you are making in each lesson, so that it is as good as it can be.

Many thanks again and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Andy McDowall Lead inspector



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