

# The Oaklands Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103194
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	308245
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 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	295
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Vacant Position
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Worland
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Dolphin Lane Acocks Green Birmingham B27 7BT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01217 062168
<b>Fax number</b>	01217 070205

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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 currently a larger than average sized primary school. However, a change in admission numbers will see the school roll fall to nearer the average in the next few years. The school serves an area where there are significant levels of social deprivation. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals and the percentage from minority ethnic groups are well above average. The proportion of pupils attending the school with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also well above average.

## 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 quality of education. It successfully promotes good personal development and the pastoral care and guidance the pupils receive are good, but they only make satisfactory academic progress during their time at the school.

When they start in the Nursery, the pupils have skills and abilities that are below those found nationally. Standards throughout the school fluctuate from year to year but are below average overall. The school is correctly focusing its efforts on raising standards in mathematics throughout the school and in English in Key Stage 2. Pupils with learning and/or behavioural difficulties are supported well by all the staff and make good progress, but more able pupils are not always catered for adequately and some do not do as well as they should. The satisfactory progress the pupils make in their work ensures they are adequately prepared for the next stage in their education and later life. Good pastoral guidance and support ensures that pupils enjoy school, behave well and show a good understanding of how to keep safe. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They are very keen to take on responsibility, enjoy helping others in the playground, and also make a good contribution to the wider community. The school effectively celebrates cultural diversity. This enables the pupils to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and each other. The school has very effectively deployed a range of strategies to raise the level of attendance.

There are some strengths in both the curriculum and the teaching and learning in the school, but they are not yet good because they are not yet successful in promoting good progress. The programme of educational visits is good and the outstanding residential opportunities enrich the curriculum and contribute very well to the pupils' personal and social development. Pupils said that they really enjoy 'all the adventurous activities and the opportunities to help them grow up and be independent'. Relationships in the school are good and the staff manage behaviour well. In some lessons, the same work is set for all the pupils and the more able pupils are not challenged enough. The teachers mark the pupils' work regularly, but the quality of marking is inconsistent. The degree to which the pupils are involved in setting and reviewing their targets is also variable from class to class. Consequently, not all pupils are clear about what it is they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The leaders and managers have been successful in raising standards in writing at Key Stage 1, but not enough has been done to raise the standards of the higher attaining pupils when it is clear from their books that they could do better. The systems to check on the quality of teaching and learning are not always incisive enough to bring about rapid improvement. Nevertheless, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and has a secure view of its own strengths and weaknesses.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children have a wide range of experiences and abilities when they start school but, overall, their attainment is well below that expected for children of this age. Satisfactory provision ensures that they make steady progress, but many still do not reach the expected level by the time they start Year 1. The teaching ensures that children are happy, curious and want to learn. However, it lacks a sense of urgency to ensure all children reach their full potential, particularly

the more able. The curriculum is satisfactory. It ensures most children become independent and confident. Children enjoy their first experience of school.

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by improving the way teachers use assessment information to plan work that challenges all pupils, particularly those capable of reaching the higher levels.
- Improve the consistency of marking and ensure the pupils are more involved in setting and reviewing their own targets.
- Improve the rigour of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by focusing on measuring the progress pupils are making, and ensure prompt action is taken when progress is less than it should be.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted Inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement in the school is satisfactory. When they start at the school, the children's skills and abilities are particularly weak in language and communication. Although progress is variable from class to class throughout the school, it is satisfactory overall. Standards are below average in Key Stage 1. They are highest in writing, where progress is good and standards are close to the national average with good numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels. They are below average in mathematics, where too few pupils reach the higher levels. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have fluctuated in recent years and after very low results in the national assessments in 2006, they are now improving, although standards in mathematics are still low. Some of the higher attaining pupils are not reaching their full potential, particularly in mathematics, but those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about the range of activities and resources the school provides. The small number of pupils who present challenging behaviour are well supported by the school. The pupils report that any bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively. They have a good awareness of how to distinguish right from wrong, and are offered a wide range of responsibilities that enable them to make an active and positive contribution to both the school and wider community. The school promotes healthy living and the pupils are enthusiastic about exercise, but some do not include healthy choices in their packed lunches. School and class councils enable pupils to express their views and to influence what happens in school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils say 'teachers try to make lessons fun'. In a Year 1 science lesson, the teacher made the learning stimulating and interesting by taking the pupils outside to classify living and non-living

things in the school grounds. In some lessons, however, the pupils are sitting for long periods because the teachers do too much talking. Consequently, pupils can occasionally become restless and bored. Teachers manage their classes well; they gain the attention of their pupils and use the good relationships to motivate them to work conscientiously. Teachers' planning does not take into account the needs of all the pupils. Because there is insufficient planning for the higher attaining pupils, they do not always make enough progress in lessons. Teachers' use of 'talking partners' for discussion and learning is effective and much enjoyed by the pupils.

The school effectively analyses its results to identify pupils who need extra help. The team of teaching assistants plays an effective and valuable part in supporting these pupils, who make good progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum provides effectively for the needs of most pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but it does not always meet the needs of higher attaining pupils.

The school is now working to improve links between subjects in order to help pupils make purposeful connections between aspects of their work and increase their creativity and enjoyment in learning, and provision for information and communication technology is improving. A comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education serves pupils well in becoming responsible citizens.

A good range of activities such as sport, music and cooking enrich the curriculum. It is further enhanced by planned visits such as a middle school visit to Hatton Country World to see and learn about different animals. Good use is made of visitors to school, such as when pupils produced posters with a community artist supporting police work on anti-social behaviour.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Parents and carers have confidence in the care provided for their children. Pastoral care is good. There are clear guidelines describing expected standards of behaviour. All arrangements for ensuring health, safety and minimising risks are securely in place. Child protection procedures meet all requirements. The school works most effectively in partnership with a wide range of external agencies such as the Behaviour Support Service and local schools to benefit the pupils' learning and well-being.

The systematic tracking of the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Regular meetings between teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies ensure these pupils make good progress. Academic support and guidance are satisfactory, but assessment information is not used consistently to ensure the more able pupils are challenged in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to take some responsibility for their own learning and teachers set individual targets for them. However, insufficient reference is made to these targets during lessons or in marking to provide the pupils with a clear idea of what they have to do to reach their personal targets.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher provides good leadership in terms of the personal development and pastoral care of the pupils. The systems to track the progress pupils are making are developing well, giving the senior staff a clear picture of each pupil's progress. They set appropriately challenging targets for the school and are increasingly effective in the way resources are deployed. However, the school does not always act quickly enough to analyse assessment information and follow it up to ensure that gaps in the pupils' learning are quickly addressed. Staff with management responsibilities are given time to monitor and evaluate the work of the school, but some of these activities are not sharp enough to clearly identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning. The school has plans in place to improve this. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

The governors are supportive of the school. Along with the headteacher they have successfully managed the finances to overcome budgetary difficulties, so that the school is now on a secure financial footing. They provide some challenge to the school and recognise that they must develop this further to ensure best value for money.

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## 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?	3
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	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	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	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

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oaklands Primary School, Birmingham, B27 7BT

Thank you all for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school recently.

We were all very pleased to see how much you enjoy school. Your behaviour is good. Keep it up! Everyone at your school has been working terrifically hard to improve your attendance and you have been really successful. Keep coming to school every day and I am sure you will achieve the school target of 94% attendance this year.

We did notice that although you are all bringing healthy food to eat at playtimes some of you are not bringing healthy food in your packed lunches. Everyone at the school works hard to keep you safe in school and those of you who find things difficult sometimes do well because of the help you get from the staff.

You told us you all enjoy the school visits and the opportunities you have to go away together. Like you, we think that your school does really well to provide so many trips for you. We feel these visits are one of the reasons you all get along so well together.

We have asked the school to help you all to improve your work in English and mathematics and to plan some more difficult activities for those of you who find the work easy. This will help you all to make good progress and do as well as you can.

We have also asked the teachers to keep reminding you about your targets and to help you to make sure that when your work is marked they tell you what it is you need to do to get better. You can help by checking your work every day to see if you have reached your target yet.

Finally, we have asked the school to improve the way it checks on how well you are learning in the classroom.

Thank you again for being so friendly and good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

Andy McDowall Lead inspector



11 October 2007

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Lead inspector