

Severne Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103252
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	308264
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	404
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adrian Dence
Headteacher	Peter Hopkins
Date of previous school inspection	18 April 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Severne Road Acocks Green Birmingham B27 7HR
Telephone number	01217 062743
Fax number	01217 062756

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come to this large primary school from Acocks Green and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is very high. The school has a broadly average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is in one Nursery class and two Reception classes. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is very high, with most being at an early stage of learning English. The most common first languages of these learners are Urdu, Punjabi and Somali. The headteacher has been at the school just over two years and there have been a number of long-term staff absences over this time. An independently run after-school club meets at the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving and pupils are very enthusiastic about coming to it. A good curriculum contributes well to pupils' thorough enjoyment of learning and is successful in teaching them to behave well and become good citizens. Children make a sound start to their education in the EYFS.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are good features to teaching in all classes. As a result, most pupils build steadily on what they have already learnt. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, standards are slightly below average. Pupils are now doing better in English than in mathematics. Standards in writing are rising, and are broadly average by the end of Year 2. The school has concentrated well on increasing opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills. In mathematics lessons, teachers do not always match work closely enough to the wide range of needs in each class, and when this happens, learning slows. The school is aware that too few opportunities are provided for pupils to practise what they have learnt in mathematics when working in other subjects.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants to help them reach their individual targets. The school runs a good number of intervention programmes to help pupils who find learning difficult. An increasing proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language are attending the school and are supported well by teachers and multilingual assistants, enabling them to learn to speak English quickly. The school's tracking information shows, however, that teachers do not always expect enough from pupils of average ability. These pupils do not always make as much progress as they should.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being are evident in their healthy lifestyles and thorough knowledge of how to stay safe. They develop good spiritual, moral, social and cultural values and are particularly polite and friendly. They make a significant contribution to the community through the school council and by carrying out many jobs in school and in the local community. The school prepares the pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of education and later life. This is evident in pupils' satisfactory progress in developing basic skills and in their good range of social skills. Care, guidance and support are good and contribute hugely to pupils' good personal development and well-being. Members of staff are very caring and support the pastoral needs of pupils and their families very well. Pupils' progress is checked carefully, although this information is not always used well enough when planning lessons. The school has started to set challenging targets for all pupils to ensure that their progress is more even across the school. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously but do not always ensure that their advice is followed up quickly.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is caring, friendly and approachable. He is focused on raising standards and, together with other members of staff, makes sure that pupils' well-being is prioritised. Leaders know how to improve the school and recent initiatives are already speeding up the rate of pupils' progress, especially in English. The school is demonstrating that it has the necessary capacity to improve further, although several long-term absences of staff have slowed the pace of change over the past two years. Leaders have started work on sharing good practice in order to improve provision across the school.

The school has a good partnership with parents. Parents make positive comments such as, 'My children really enjoy coming to this school.' They point out that, for example, 'Members of

staff do extra things to support children who are less able.' These comments identify what the school is already doing well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision for children in the EYFS is satisfactory. On entry to the EYFS, a third of children are working at the levels typically expected for this age group. Other children are working at lower levels. Standards are below average overall when children move on into Year 1. These standards represent satisfactory progress in relation to children's starting points. Children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and physical development because these skills are promoted especially well.

Children learn quickly in the Nursery because teaching is good. They are given a wide range of activities that are matched well to their differing needs. They settle into school routines well and are given a lot of support to learn and understand new vocabulary. Teaching and learning in Reception are satisfactory and there are some good features. Members of staff ensure that children's welfare is a priority and provide calm and sensitive support as needed. They manage behaviour well and explain tasks clearly. However, there are occasions when adults do not intervene enough to help move the children's learning forward at a quick pace in Reception. Not all activities in Reception ensure that children are fully involved in learning.

Satisfactory leadership and management of the EYFS provision ensure that it continues to develop. Leaders have correctly identified the need to expand the use of the newly refurbished outdoor area and veranda.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide work that meets all pupils' needs consistently, particularly in mathematics, and ensure that the average ability pupils progress fully.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to use and develop mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Increase the impact of marking by ensuring that pupils respond quickly to written advice.

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 their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in the EYFS and in the rest of the school. Standards are below average when children start in Year 1 and are slightly below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils make more rapid progress in the Nursery and Year 6, where teaching is most effective. Recent strategies have helped improve pupils' writing, and standards are rising in this subject and are now broadly average by the end of Year 2. In mathematics, teachers do not always meet pupils' differing needs closely enough or provide opportunities in other subjects for the development of mathematical skills. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to make good progress and the school has effective intervention programmes to help pupils who are struggling to reach the nationally expected levels for their age group. However, pupils of average ability do not always make enough progress towards their targets. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language do well and learn to speak English quickly.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are very pleased that they come to this school. Attendance is average because some pupils are absent when celebrating religious festivals at home. Pupils are keen to take part in lessons and clubs and enjoy answering teachers' questions. Pupils particularly enjoy working on practical activities. They are polite, behave well and develop good self-esteem. One group of pupils ranked behaviour as being, 'about eight or nine out of ten'. Pupils work hard and cooperate with each other well.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show self-discipline by following the school rules well and respect each other's cultures. They make a good contribution to the community by raising funds for charity, planting trees and helping each other as playground buddies. They carry out a wide range of tasks around school responsibly. The school council is proud of the way it helps to improve the school. For example, councillors have helped to improve playtime facilities. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They take part in several sports and understand the merits of eating sensibly. They have a good knowledge of fire and road safety.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers manage behaviour well in lessons because they form good relationships with the pupils and use praise well to support and encourage. Teachers use information and communication technology and other resources effectively to support learning. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution towards helping pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has been successful in improving the quality of teachers' marking and most write comments to help pupils to improve their work. However, not all teachers ensure that pupils follow this advice quickly and, as a result, some pupils carry on making similar mistakes in subsequent work. Teachers in each year group plan work together and this helps them to provide pupils with interesting activities. They give clear explanations to help pupils understand what to do and consequently pupils are keen to work hard. One pupil spoke for others by saying, 'Teachers try to make the subjects really fun.' However, teachers do not consistently adjust planning to suit the needs of all pupils within their class. This is especially the case in mathematics and it is also a factor that prevents average ability pupils from making more progress towards their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of valuable experiences, helping them to enjoy school. Joint planning enables pupils in parallel classes to have equal opportunities. Successful intervention programmes help to break down barriers to learning for less able pupils and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and promote good progress. The school has recently been successful in strengthening opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum and this is a significant factor in the rising standards in this subject. Leaders are aware that there are currently too few chances for pupils to make similar use of their numeracy

skills in subjects such as science. The creative arts are promoted well in music, art and drama, contributing hugely to pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

The curriculum includes good opportunities for pupils to boost their personal development. Much is done, for example, to help pupils to make sensible lifestyle choices. A good range of clubs, visits and visitors support pupils' personal development well and broaden their experiences. The outward bound activities are effective in developing teambuilding skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils say that they feel safe at this welcoming school. As one pupil said, 'Everyone gets on well with each other.' The school works well with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being. Pupils say that they know what to do if they have a worry and are confident that members of staff will deal with any concerns quickly. Systems for safeguarding pupils are robust. Partnerships with outside agencies to support vulnerable pupils and to meet the specific needs of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good.

Thorough assessment procedures provide teachers with good information about how well pupils are doing, including those who are learning English as an additional language. The information from these systems is used to provide clear targets for pupils to aim for. As a result, pupils talk knowledgeably about what they need to do to improve their work. However, teachers do not always do enough to ensure that this advice is heeded. The school also recognises that assessment information is not used fully to fine tune activities in lessons to pupils' needs. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given good support in lessons and in relation to their welfare to ensure that they make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, governors and subject leaders are committed to increasing pupils' progress and have a shared understanding of what they should do next. The school's systems for self-evaluation are satisfactory. The headteacher has brought together members of staff as a willing and hard working team following the many staffing absences. There have been several recent changes in senior managers and collectively senior leaders are starting to move the school forward more quickly. Many changes are too new to have had a sustained impact on standards and pupils' progress. Even so, standards in writing are rising, demonstrating that the school has a sound capacity to improve further. The school's contribution towards community cohesion is good. Leaders provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about life in multicultural Britain and members of staff from various ethnic minority backgrounds provide good role models for all pupils. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and knowledgeable about the school and are becoming more proactive in discharging their responsibilities.

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

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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 learners' needs?	3
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

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 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

4 December 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Severne Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Birmingham, B27 7HR

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your work with us. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

Here are some points about your school.

- You make satisfactory progress during your time at the school.
- You behave well and enjoy school very much.
- You take responsibility well. The school council is doing a good job.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers work hard to make learning fun by giving you interesting things to do.
- You study a good range of topics, and benefit from interesting visits, visitors and clubs. The outward bound teambuilding activities sound good fun.
- The adults in the school care for you well and help you when you are finding your work hard.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know what needs doing next to make the school more successful.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Always give you work that is just right for you, especially in mathematics.
- Give you more opportunities to use and develop your mathematical skills in other subjects such as science.
- Make sure that you follow the teachers' advice on how to improve your work.

You can help by making sure that you read and follow the teachers' advice on how to improve your work, straight away. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We are glad that you enjoy coming to this happy school and wish you well for the future.

■ Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge Lead inspector