

# Cape Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103937
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	308462
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Driscoll

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	405
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rajinder Bhogal
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Kentish
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Cape Hill Smethwick B66 4SH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01215 581667
<b>Fax number</b>	01215 558025

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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

Cape is a very large primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very high. The largest group is of Pakistani origin, while others come from a wide range of different backgrounds. Around one in seven pupils is a refugee or asylum seeker, most of whom join the school with no experience of the English language. Overall, the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Cape provides a good education for its pupils. They achieve well because teaching, the curriculum and the care, guidance and support that pupils receive are all of a good quality. The school focuses its work on improving pupils' language skills as early as possible, so they improve their self-confidence and are able to play a full part in lessons. Children join the school with a much narrower range of skills and knowledge than expected for their age. They make good progress in developing their language skills in the Foundation Stage. Progress in other areas of their learning is satisfactory because tasks do not always build on what the children already know or can do, so are not always sufficiently demanding. Consequently, standards on starting Year 1 remain exceptionally low. From Year 1 on, pupils make good progress. Despite this good achievement, pupils leave school with standards that are below average because of their very low starting points.

Teachers take every opportunity to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills, which in turn gives pupils a wider vocabulary to use in their writing. Progress of individuals is sometimes slower in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 than in later years, because they occasionally struggle to get started on a piece of work when teachers do not give them ideas on how to begin. Specific groups of pupils, such as those learning English for the first time or who are falling behind in mathematics, are catered for especially well so they quickly make up lost time to achieve as well as other pupils. Teachers are very aware of the capabilities of their pupils and in Years 1 to 6 they use the accurate results from assessments to set demanding targets for them. These targets motivate the pupils to work hard and always do their best. Other aspects of pupils' personal development are also good. They are keen to come to school and are invariably well behaved. All staff have the welfare of pupils at the heart of their work. Staff work well with specialist support agencies to help pupils and their families overcome any difficulties or trauma they may have experienced. Pupils new to this country learn English by talking about their own backgrounds and cultures, so they feel confident to express their ideas.

The school has shown good improvement since it was last inspected. Standards are now the highest they have been for at least five years, attendance is rising and the quality of education has improved. The school's leaders, including governors, set challenging targets for improvement. The headteacher has introduced a system of quality assurance that identifies exactly where improvements are needed in Years 1 to 6, so that actions can be accurately targeted to do the most good. However, the same system does not operate in the Foundation Stage, so improvement has been slower and children's progress there remains satisfactory.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The good care children receive ensures that they settle quickly into the Nursery and are soon more confident in playing and sharing with others. Staff work hard to promote language skills by allowing children as many opportunities as possible to speak and listen. As a result, children make good progress in this area throughout the Foundation Stage. Progress in other areas of learning is slower, because they are not always planned for in enough detail to provide the necessary coverage and balance of all six areas of learning. Creative development is particularly weak, because, owing to the layout of the buildings, children in Reception classes do not have free access to an outside area where they could develop these skills more. Teaching is satisfactory but occasionally activities do not sufficiently challenge the most able children, while the less

able do not always understand what they are to do. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The experienced Foundation Stage leader is aware of the main areas for improvement, but the systems used for checking the quality of what is provided are not identifying the areas for improvement in enough detail, which limits the effectiveness of any plans drawn up to raise standards.

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

- Make closer checks on the Foundation Stage to identify and subsequently address those areas that prevent children from making good progress, especially the lack of challenge in some tasks.
- Ensure younger pupils have a good understanding of what is required in their work and are helped to get started.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well, and from Year 1 their standards rise steadily from exceptionally low to below average. Standards at the end of Year 6 improved dramatically in 2007, and current standards are higher still, despite this group of pupils having lower standards when they were in Year 2. The proportion of pupils reaching above average standards in English and mathematics has doubled this year, and standards in mathematics are now average overall. The school is quick to provide support to specific groups of pupils, such as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are at an early stage of learning English, so that all make equally good progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' are polite, well behaved and show a high level of concern for others. This is reflected in their fund raising activities for charities and their involvement with recycling and local initiatives to keep the environment clean. The rich cultural diversity within the school is a natural resource that helps pupils to develop a good understanding of different faiths and cultures. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their learning. They say they find their teachers friendly and helpful. Although still below the national average, the school is having considerable success in improving attendance. Pupils enjoy the range of opportunities to take responsibility within the school, such as being a playground buddy, a member of the school council or a house captain. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and they report no bullying. Around school, they are aware of the need to move in an orderly fashion to ensure that no accidents occur. By the time they leave school, pupils are mature and sensible, and the improvement in their basic skills is preparing them well for later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers in most classes in Years 1 to 6 mark pupils' work accurately and frequently, which allows them to plan lessons that build well on pupils' previous learning. As a result, pupils find the tasks they are given difficult, but achievable if they really work hard. Sometimes younger pupils and children in the Foundation Stage are not sure how to get started because they are

not completely clear about what they are supposed to do. This is not an issue in later years because teachers are quick to provide individuals with examples of what is required, such as opening sentences for a story. Such opportunities are often used to push the pace of lessons along. For example, when a class is slow to come up with ideas, teachers will say, 'One minute, talk to your partner about it', which gives new impetus to the lesson.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The strength of the curriculum lies in the way it caters for different groups within the school. Pupils at an early stage of learning English receive intensive support in small groups for example, while other groups offer support for those falling behind in a subject or with specific learning difficulties. These successfully allow pupils to catch up with the rest of their class, so they can return to mainstream lessons as soon as possible. The groups do not only focus on academic standards. There is, for example, a 'healthy hearts' club for those pupils most in need of help in improving their health. This, together with a wide range of well supported sport clubs, ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. Other clubs and activities, such as the residential visit to Dorset, successfully promote pupils' good social skills, such as team working. The school is currently changing the curriculum to provide pupils with more opportunities for practical tasks, self-evaluation and peer assessment. The revised planning is already making learning more meaningful and enjoyable in Years 1 and 2, but the changes have not yet been implemented in later years.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The pastoral care provided by the school is very good. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' health and safety are robust. The most vulnerable children are particularly well cared for, benefiting from the good links that have been established with parents and external agencies. These links are also used to improve pupils' attendance, which has improved for the last two years and is considerably higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Academic guidance and support are also good. The school has good systems for keeping an accurate track of pupils' progress, which are updated every few weeks. Pupils are given challenging targets in literacy and numeracy and are frequently involved in monitoring and evaluating their own progress. The targets are used to motivate pupils to reach higher standards, and in most classes they are given good guidance on how to achieve them, especially through marking and comments in books. In some cases however, incorrect work is marked as correct and pupils mistakenly think they have achieved a target.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The good progress made since the school was last inspected, and especially over the past two years, demonstrates that the school's leaders, including governors, have the skills necessary to take the school even further forward. Many changes to management systems have been implemented since the school was last inspected which provide the school with an accurate evaluation of its work. At the heart of these changes lie the good systems for checking and improving what the school provides. The headteacher uses the information gained from checks on pupils' progress to identify those pupils who are doing well or falling behind in each class.

Other members of the senior management team then play a good role in determining the reasons for such differences in performance, so that lessons can be learned for the future. Plans to improve English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology include challenging targets for raising standards. The systems for checking the Foundation Stage are entirely different. They do not take enough account of the impact of provision on the progress made by the children, so managers are not able to accurately identify what aspects of teaching and the curriculum work well and what needs improving.

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## 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?	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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
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	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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	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

25 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Cape Primary School, Smethwick, B66 4SH

Thank you for welcoming us into your school and helping with our inspection. We were most impressed by your good manners and your behaviour. Overall, we found that you go to a good school and are getting a good education. Many of you are learning English for the first time, so the teachers give you lots of help to make sure you catch up with others and do as well as possible in lessons. The youngest children settle into Nursery well and do as well as we would expect by the time they are ready to start Year 1. From then on, you do well. Most teachers are good at checking your work and making sure you understand what to do next. Some of the younger children do not always know how to get started on their work, so we have asked the teachers to give them some more ideas of what they could do to begin. You told us that you like having targets to aim for and that most of the work really makes you think hard, although the work for the youngest ones can sometimes be a bit easy. The teachers are good at spotting any of you who may be finding the work a bit too difficult, so they can then give you extra help to catch up with the rest of the class.

You also told us how much you like coming to school, because you get on well with each other and all the grown-ups. All the grown-ups take good care of you, and they are very good at helping anyone who has a problem or is scared because they have only just arrived in England. One of the ways they do this is by becoming friends with the people who look after you at home. This helps them explain how important it is for you to come to school every day. You could help too, by telling the people who look after you how much you are learning and how you need to come to school whenever you can.

Your school is getting better and better, because the people who run it have found out what things are most in need of improvement in Years 1 to 6, and are doing something about them. We have asked them to do the same in the Nursery and Reception classes, so that they can improve as quickly as the rest of the school.

With all best wishes for your futures.

David Driscoll Lead inspector