

Summerfield Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103196
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	323774
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2009
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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)	301
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	Penny Howe
Headteacher	Pip Wilkes
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Cuthbert Road Winson Green Birmingham B18 4AH

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2009
Inspection number	323774

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The very large majority of pupils at Summerfield come from a minority ethnic background. The proportion speaking English as an additional language is well above average, with 25 different languages represented in the school. Around one in three pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is well above the national average. The Early Years Foundation Stage includes Nursery and Reception provision.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Summerfield is a good school. It is a harmonious community where staff work hard to ensure that all pupils have equal chances to do well. From low starting points, overall achievement is good. Although standards are below average in English, mathematics and science when pupils leave at Year 6, academic performance has improved a great deal since the school was last inspected. Weaknesses in particular subjects, like mathematics, and within specific ethnic groups, have been successfully targeted. The focused support provided for pupils who speak English as an additional language, or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, ensures that they make the same good progress as other pupils.

Pupils' personal development is equally as good as their academic progress and provides an invaluable foundation for their learning in lessons. They are polite and welcoming to visitors, and keen to learn about how others live in other parts of this country and abroad. Pupils get on very well with each other, and develop a good deal of respect and tolerance for different faiths and cultures. A rich and varied curriculum ensures that pupils enjoy coming to school, particularly because they spend a lot of time 'doing things' in lessons. The school provides good care, guidance and support, both pastorally and academically. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully, so that learning mentors, translators, or specialists in learning difficulties can be deployed to help any who are falling behind. Attendance is satisfactory. The school works hard to encourage good attendance, but is not yet analysing attendance data in sufficient depth to identify underlying reasons for persistent absence in order to target support and gain further improvement.

Progress is strongest in Years 1 to 6. Here, activities are closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities. This approach is not as well developed in the Nursery and Reception because assessment is not so strongly focused on what children already know and can do. This shortcoming particularly affects the quality of planning for those activities children select for themselves. As a result, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory, rather than good, progress.

The school has moved on a good deal over the last three years, with rising standards and improving achievement demonstrating a good capacity for further development. The headteacher leads very much from the front and has created a strong team spirit among staff. Monitoring is rigorous and frequent, providing the school with a clear understanding of its strengths and priorities. Governance is satisfactory. Finances are managed well, but governors rely too heavily on the headteacher to provide them with an evaluation of the school's performance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with much lower than expected attainment, particularly in language and communication. The Nursery and Reception groups are taught together in one large unit and move between the two groups, depending on their activities. This approach provides well for their personal development, providing them with positive attitudes to school life right from the start. Progress in their personal and social skills is good, so that standards in this area are average when children start Year 1. In all other areas of learning, progress is satisfactory. As a result, and given their low starting points, standards are still well below average by the end of Reception.

Children behave well and the majority enjoy being able to choose their own activities. Children show increasing independence and confidence. They play and work cooperatively together. All staff work well as team to ensure that health and safety procedures are followed, reflecting the good attention paid to care and welfare. Leadership is satisfactory and there is a clear commitment to improve provision. The introduction of a daily phonics lesson and the 'Forest School' are helping to improve the progress that children make, especially in their speaking and listening skills. Those pupils learning to speak English for the first time benefit from strong bilingual support, giving them emerging confidence with this new language in preparation for later learning. Detailed planning takes place for adult-led activities, but is more limited for those activities which the children choose for themselves. These shortcomings in planning occur because children's learning is not always assessed as systematically as it should be to identify the next steps in learning. This means activities do not routinely ensure that children build on their previous experiences. Children have regular access to the outdoor area, but the school is well aware that this space is not as well developed as the indoor environment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that activities build on children's prior learning, especially those activities children choose for themselves.
- Carry out more detailed analysis of attendance data to identify emerging trends at an earlier stage and ensure accurate reporting of attendance figures.
- Improve the role played by governors in monitoring the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards and achievement have improved significantly since the school was last inspected, such that current achievement overall is good. From Year 1 onwards, progress is good in all years. Standards at the end of Year 2 were well below average in 2008, but current standards are better, although still below average. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is also good. Standards at Year 6 are currently below average in English, mathematics and science. These standards are not quite as high as those of pupils who left in 2008, but there is a much higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in this year's group. In previous years, some groups, such as pupils from a Pakistani background, have made slower progress than others. The school has worked hard to improve the performance of this and all groups, so that now all make equally good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils work hard and are well motivated in lessons, although they sometimes lack self-confidence and rely too heavily on their teachers' encouragement. Pupils behave well, especially in the playground, where their good understanding of how to stay safe becomes apparent as older ones keep a careful eye on others. Pupils possess a strong sense of community. They not only play a good role in the school community, by acting as peer mediators and play leaders, for example, but also know a good deal about what it means to be a good citizen and how others live in different parts of the country. Attendance has improved this year, but is still below average. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. Those who eat school dinners put their knowledge into practice by choosing healthy options. However, many packed lunches do not provide a balanced meal as they contain crisps, chocolate and

sweets, even though this is against school rules. Pupils' strong personal qualities and willingness to persevere, together with their good academic progress and increasing academic skills, stand them in good stead for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Despite some shortcomings in the Early Years Foundation Stage, thereafter lessons are consistently well planned, with activities that make pupils think and work hard. In the main, teachers have a very clear idea of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses, so are able to match activities closely to their abilities. Marking usually provides detailed feedback on pupils' work, but too often checks are not made to ensure that the pupils have carried out corrections or followed the advice given. In all years, teaching assistants and other adults are deployed very well to support individuals or groups of pupils, and are especially good at helping those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress. They are equally as demanding as the class teachers, asking questions that help the pupils do activities for themselves, rather than providing too much help.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils say that one of the main reasons for their good enjoyment of school is the way that teachers make learning fun by providing them with lots of practical and stimulating activities. Pupils learned how to follow instructions, for example, by making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, while at the same time learning about the traditions associated with it. Pupils also enjoy the wide range of enrichment activities, visits and clubs, which are well supported. They learn about different cultures and faiths, including those that are not represented in the school. The new arrangements for teaching numeracy in smaller groups have had a dramatic effect on pupils' progress, improving mathematics from a relative weakness to one of the school's strengths.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements for promoting the safety of children are good and procedures for Child Protection meet requirements. Systems for tracking pupils' progress, both academically and personally, are good on the whole and strongest in Years 3 to 6. The school is quick to allocate support where it is needed most. Many children are learning English for the first time. The good bilingual support they receive throughout the school ensures they are soon joining in the full range of activities and making equally as good progress as others. The 'mentor' team helps pupils to become more confident and develop their self-esteem. The same team also works effectively with individuals to improve their attendance, although data are not analysed to determine underlying trends in absenteeism in the longer term. Pupils all know their targets and are given good advice as to what they need to do to improve, although this guidance is not always followed up.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, her deputy and key members of staff possess a very clear idea of where improvements are needed. Checks on teaching, and especially planning, are thorough and frequent. They identify exactly where lessons can be improved, as well as the approaches that work particularly well. These observations have not been quite as focused in the Early Years Foundation Stage, however, and the school is aware that more time must be allocated to monitoring here. Governors are now being trained in effective monitoring, as they recognised that this was an area of their duties that was not fulfilled as well as others. The school knows that helping parents to help their children learn is a key component for raising standards, so good efforts are made to involve them in the life of the school, and especially so for those parents who are hesitant about coming into school. A booster class for Year 6 pupils was especially well attended by parents for example, so they could see what was expected of pupils in mathematics. The school is well aware of the need to broaden pupils' horizons, and goes to great lengths to help them learn about communities in other parts of Britain and across the globe. Pupils regularly visit schools in rural areas or near the coast, for example, to learn about life for children who do not live in a city.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	3
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?	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/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	3
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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	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 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	2
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**

16 March 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Summerfield Junior and Infant School, Birmingham, B18 4AH

Thank you very much for your welcome and help when we visited your school. We were very impressed by your good behaviour and manners. Your parents and teachers can be very proud of you.

We found that you are getting a good education. You learn quickly because your teachers know how well you are doing and what you need to learn about next. They ask you questions that really make you think hard. Those of you who find learning more difficult, or who are learning to speak English for the first time, also do well because there is lots of help available for you. The youngest ones in the school do not learn quite as quickly as others. Therefore, we have asked the teachers to find out more about what these children can do already, so that they can help them learn more quickly. You told us that you like lessons because you are often doing things, rather than just listening. We agree, and this is one of the reasons why you enjoy coming to school. Some of you do not come as often as you could. So we have asked the people who run the school to keep a careful eye on the numbers who come, and to do something about it when the numbers fall. You can help by asking your parents and carers to send you to school whenever you are well enough. All the grown ups take good care of you, which means that you feel safe in school.

Your school is getting better and better. The staff who run the school know very well what the school does well, and where it could still be improved, because they do lots of checks to make sure everybody is doing their job properly. We have asked the governors, who also look after your school, to help by doing some of the checks themselves. Your parents and carers are pleased with the education you are getting. The school works hard to get your parents and carers more involved with the school, so they know how to help you to do even better.

With all best wishes to you all for the future

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll

Lead inspector