

Perry Beeches Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103163
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336023
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Alan Dobbins

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	335
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Gwilliam
Headteacher	Elaine Williams
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent 65 percent of their time looking at learning, saw 13 lessons in whole or in part, observed 12 of the school's teachers, held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and spoke with the school improvement officer and the local authority's advisor to the school. They looked at data the school has on pupils' progress. They scrutinised 59 questionnaires and spoke with 35 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at:

- how well teaching helps all pupils with their learning, but especially those learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effectiveness of the changing curriculum in stimulating learning
- how well the care and support arrangements meet the learning and other needs of pupils and their parents and carers
- how effective leaders are, including the governors, in raising standards, especially in mathematics.

Information about the school

This is a large school. About half of the pupils are from a White British heritage and the others are mostly of an Asian or African heritage. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is very much higher than is typically found in other schools, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the proportion who have free school meals. The school is co-located on a large campus, with the feeder infant school, the secondary school, to which many pupils transfer at the end of Year 6, and a special school for pupils with visual impairment. The school holds the Active Schools Mark and the national Healthy Schools Award. The recently appointed headteacher took up the post in January 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Perry Beeches is a good school because, overall, pupils make good progress in their learning and develop into well-rounded young people who are prepared well for the next stage of their education and later life. Parents and carers are happy with the school, saying, for example, that it is 'a good place' for their children.

Typically, pupils join the school with below average attainment. Over their time at school they make good progress to reach national averages. Attainment is improving; last year's Year 6 results were the highest the school has had for leavers. Over each of the last three years pupils have done better in English and science than in mathematics. The school has recognised this and has worked successfully to improve performance in mathematics, especially for girls who have not done as well as the boys. Teaching, overall, is good and pupils make good progress in most lessons. In a few lessons, teaching is not targeted precisely enough to meet the learning needs of all pupils, and because of this some pupils complete tasks that are too easy for them whilst others attempt tasks that are too hard for them and learning is compromised. Sometimes pupils do not know what is required of them to move to the next level of their learning and marking does not make a sufficient contribution to improving learning.

The school is a happy place and the caring and supportive ethos is easy to see. Pupils say they feel extremely safe and enjoy coming to school, and their parents and carers agree with them. Their personal development is good. They have a secure understanding of right and wrong and show maturity when they have difficult choices to make, including those to do with staying safe and keeping healthy.

With the recent appointment of the new headteacher, the senior leadership team is well constituted. Staff are very positive about the future. The capacity for sustained improvement is good. Through the effective procedures for self-evaluation leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well, and they have a solid track record of improvement. They take justifiable pride in recognising the quality performance of last year's leavers. They recognise that monitoring, including the checking of teaching and learning is accurate but not sufficiently rigorous to ensure a more rapid pace of development. For example, leaders make good use of pupils' scores at the end of Year 2 to predict how well they should be doing at the end of Year 6 and to judge how well they have done, but they do not always act quickly enough in helping those pupils who are struggling to meet their targets. Governors know the school and meet their remit in setting a clear strategy. They challenge, but more confidently in matters to do with provision or pupils' personal development than concerning attainment and progress. The school has many good partnerships that enhance learning, including effective arrangements with the co-located special school. However, links with other schools on

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the site are making too limited a contribution to raising achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards to above average by making more effective use of assessment information:
 - in planning lessons that are relevant to all pupils
 - in letting pupils know what is required of them to move to the next level of their learning
 - by improving the marking of work so that pupils know what they need to do to get better.
- Fine tune monitoring, particularly:
 - the analysis of progress towards Year 6 predicted attainment in order to identify improvements to provision
 - observations of teaching and learning so that senior leaders can quickly ensure improvement
 - the procedures governors have to check the quality of work of the school, especially the attainment and progress of pupils.
- Make more effective use of partnerships with other schools in extending and enriching pupils learning experiences.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' positive attitudes to their work and their, routinely, good behaviour show that they are fully comfortable in their role as learners. The good relationships they have with their teachers and teaching assistants, and with each other, help make lessons harmonious events that are, most often, fully enjoyed by pupils. They perform well in lessons, working hard for their teachers and assistants and taking as much pleasure from celebrating the successes of their friends as they gain from their own successes. Pupils like the changing curriculum because they see the topics as interesting and because they are provided with many opportunities to be active in their learning when they have to seek new information for themselves. The pace of learning is usually high. Occasionally it slows when tasks are not closely matched to pupils' abilities. In general, however, there is no difference between the progress of pupils of different abilities, nor between that of pupils from different backgrounds. Current records show that girls leaving at the end of this year have, substantially, caught up with the boys. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are doing well in their learning, as are those who speak English as an additional language.

The very strong relationships pupils have with each other minimise their differences in gender, cultural heritage and religious belief. When at school, first and foremost, they are pupils of Perry Beeches school who are all friends with each other. Pupils' ideas are taken seriously, and members of the school council are particularly pleased that their

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voice was heard in the development of the playground. They gain awareness of the needs of the wider world through fundraising for international aid charities. Gaining national awards, and more recently the local Primary Care Trust commendation, has helped make visible the importance of maintaining a healthy life style. The positive impact of the national awards the school has gained is shown by pupils' high take-up of school meals, and by their regular participation in the after-school sporting clubs and the 'Bike It' scheme for riding to school. The pupils belong to choirs, meet and entertain visitors commendably well and perform in the regular school plays, all good activities for developing their social skills.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The high level of care the school gives is clear from the statements of parents and carers who see the school as 'a place where (their children) can be helped to grow up properly'. In this safe and secure environment pupils flourish as learners. Pupils enjoy learning many subjects more since they have been presented within general topics. Learning about World War II, for example, is made vibrant and exciting by carefully

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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planned visits to the War Museum and through discussions with older members of the local community who still retain vivid memories of the war. Teachers usually plan well, making lessons a compilation of tasks that are both interesting and relevant, well matched to abilities. As a consequence, most lessons are characterised by pupils pursuing their learning, often in pairs or as members of a small group. Activities are less well targeted in a small minority of lessons.

Teachers question effectively to gauge pupils' understanding and to take them further. They ensure pupils understand what they are being asked to achieve in the lesson and do give feedback during the lesson on how well pupils are doing. However, pupils do not always get good enough guidance on what they need to do longer term to move on - they do not all know their next target for learning. Too often marking is celebratory only.

The wide range of extra curricular activity adds good breadth and value to the curriculum. The many lunch time and after school clubs have a high take up and are much enjoyed, as are the residential visits made by pupils, Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those learning English as an additional language, gain good support from the designated teaching assistants and from specialist staff from outside agencies. Arrangements for the care and support of pupils during their passage through the school and in transition to secondary schools work well. The school has good procedures to encourage regular attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

With the recent appointment of the headteacher the leadership structure is complete. Governors are committed. Staff morale is high and staff are enthusiastic about further development of the school, for example at the prospect of leading improved performance in the different subjects. The self-evaluation procedures are becoming more rigorous and all staff are committed to making the school an even better place, not only for learning, but for helping pupils to develop into well-balanced young people. Safeguarding procedures are thorough, and the school ensures it adopts good practice. There is no discrimination of any sort and monitoring has been effective in ensuring that differences in the progress of boys and girls have been eliminated. Vulnerable pupils are supported so they can play a full part in all the school offers. Links with groups in the local area are well established. Those with international communities are being

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developed. Parents and carers report that the school is a cohesive place; this is easily seen in the strong relationships that permeate it and the way all in school, staff and pupils, respect and care for each other and show concern for each other's well-being.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire or spoke with inspectors say they like the school very much. They are very pleased that their children enjoy school so much and are confident that their children are safe and happy. They like the way they are kept in touch with the progress their children are making. A small minority felt that the once a week homework was too little, but many others felt that this was just right. Inspectors judged homework to be appropriate. Most parents and carers were pleased with the progress their children were making but a small number were not. Inspectors judged that pupils are making good progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Perry Beeches Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 335 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	47	30	51	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	63	21	36	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	32	37	63	1	2	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	36	31	53	7	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	42	28	47	4	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	49	26	44	3	5	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	36	36	61	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	20	34	33	57	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	37	32	54	5	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	47	27	47	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	32	35	59	5	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	36	32	54	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	44	32	54	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



27 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Perry Beeches Junior School, Birmingham, B42 2PY

It was lovely for me and my colleagues to meet and talk with you when we visited your school. Thank you for making us so welcome. We found the school to be providing you with a good education. We think you are doing well in your learning but we want your senior leaders to make the school even better. These are some of the things we especially liked:

- you told us you feel safe and comfortable at school and get on very well with your teachers and each other
- you make good progress
- you behave well and show good attitudes to your work
- you know the importance of a healthy lifestyle and most of you make healthy choices most of the time

There are a few things I have asked the school to work on. I would like teachers to make sure lessons are always just right for you - not too hard and not too easy. I also want them to make sure you know what your targets are and how to improve your written work. You can help by asking if you are not sure. I have asked leaders, including governors, to improve checks they make on how the school is doing. This includes checks on your progress and what happens in lessons. Finally, I want the school to make even closer arrangements with the other schools on your campus so that you can gain more benefit from their facilities and the expertise of their staff.

Thank you again for being so welcoming - I will always have pleasant memories of my time with you.

Yours sincerely

Alan Dobbins

Lead inspector

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