

# Ladypool Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103265
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	336044
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Walsh

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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	480
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mohammed Mumtaz
<b>Headteacher</b>	Liz Manley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Stratford Road Sparkbrook Birmingham
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's monitoring records, records of pupils' progress and scrutinised pupils' work and considered the responses to 174 parents' questionnaires.

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

- progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the impact that it has on children's progress
- strategies to improve pupils' attendance.

## Information about the school

The school is much larger than most primary schools. The vast majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds with those from Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritages forming the biggest groups. Small numbers of other pupils come from a very wide range of other heritages. English is not the first language for the majority of pupils. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

**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?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in outcomes and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils' achievement in writing in Key Stage 2, levels of attendance and the way the school promotes community cohesion.

Although there is an improving picture in academic performance, achievement overall is inadequate because children make too little progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in the Nursery, and in writing at Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has improved from a very low base, but standards are still significantly below average. Standards in mathematics are rising at a faster rate than in English and there is still more to do to improve the quality of pupils' writing. Progress is improving across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, helped by pupils' enthusiasm for learning and desire to do well. As a result, pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good progress. Progress at Key Stage 2, however, is more mixed, largely because pupils are having to make up lost ground. While progress is satisfactory in reading, mathematics and science, it remains too slow in writing.

The headteacher and other senior leaders know where the school needs to make improvements and there are well-laid plans that are based on careful audits of provision and outcomes. School leaders have ensured that teaching is satisfactory and improving but are aware that the way teachers use assessment information to set work that matches pupils' abilities is underdeveloped and that academic guidance has yet to be strengthened.

Pupils are proud of their school. This is illustrated by their good behaviour in class and around the school. Pupils say, 'The teachers always listen to you if you have problems', and consequently, they feel safe and secure and enthusiastically embrace healthy lifestyles. The school's recent thorough checking of the way it contributes to community cohesion has revealed that provision in this area is currently inadequate. The staff have rightly identified that much more needs to be done to ensure that pupils have a better depth of understanding of the wider community in the United Kingdom and have the chance to learn about others from different backgrounds. In addition, the school is aware that there are few international links.

Pupils are not adequately prepared for the next stage of their education. Their academic skills are below average and their attendance rates are low. Poor attendance is having a

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negative impact on learning and is leading to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding that constrain progress. The school is working hard to improve attendance rates but recognises that even more needs to be done to ensure pupils and parents understand the importance of good attendance.

Rising standards and increasing progress illustrate the school's satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. The leadership team has steered the school through some difficult times and now has the overwhelming support of parents, who are confident that their children are happy and safe. Staff are hardworking and committed and extensive monitoring has already secured improvements to teaching. In addition, analysis of data has given the school a clear view of strengths and weaknesses to guide its future improvement.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage by
  - implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, especially in the Nursery
  - ensuring that activities are well planned, effectively supported and move children's learning on
  - improving the use of the outdoor space
  - making sure that assessment information is accurate and used to meet children's needs.
- Enhance the quality of assessment in Key Stage 1 and 2 by:
  - making sure that pupils always know precisely what they are expected to learn in all lessons and checking their learning at the end
  - making certain that marking and target setting are used effectively to give pupils clear guidance about how to improve their work.
  - improving the way assessment information is used to ensure that the work set matches pupils' individual needs.
- Raise standards in writing in Key Stage 2 by:
  - improving the accuracy of pupils' speech
  - ensuring that their written work makes sense
  - improving pupils' spelling
- Improve the school's contribution to community cohesion by providing pupils with opportunities to learn about children from different backgrounds and by developing international links.
- Raise attendance rates by working with parents and pupils to stress the importance of good attendance

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Despite some improvement to academic outcomes, remaining areas of inadequate progress, most particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, mean that achievement is inadequate. Attainment has been significantly below average over the last three years at the end of Key Stage 1, although the gap between national results and the school's results is narrowing. Pupils from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds are making better progress than their peer groups nationally and have made good progress, particularly in reading and writing.

Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been significantly below average, overall, for the last four years, although it has improved every year. The unvalidated results for 2009 are close to average in mathematics and science, but are still significantly below average in English. This is because writing is especially weak and very few pupils reach the higher levels. Pupils of Pakistani heritage are now reaching similar standards to their peer groups nationally and are doing well in mathematics, but those of Bangladeshi descent are still significantly behind their peer group nationally. Progress is uneven. There are pockets of good progress, but the current Year 6 pupils made slow progress last year and are now having to catch up. Pupils want to do well and work hard. However, while progress is now satisfactory in reading, mathematics and science, it remains inadequate in writing. Although pupils often produce very neat pieces of work that are lively and of a good length, its meaning is not always clear. Grammar can be imprecise, reflecting the fact that accurate speech is not always actively encouraged, and there are weaknesses in spelling. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress at a similar rate to other pupils. Their progress is compromised when they miss many sessions of their support programmes.

Pupils recognise that school lunches are nutritious and the school has worked hard with parents to make sure that lunchboxes contain healthy food. Pupils tuck in with enthusiasm and are equally eager to take part in exercise. They have a well developed sense of right and wrong and work well together in class. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that staff always take any concerns seriously. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community and both the School Council and the Eco Committee are eager to improve the school environment. However, pupils have limited opportunities to contribute to the wider community and their knowledge of British culture is sometimes not well developed. Although it is very clear that pupils enjoy school their attendance rates are too low. Poor attendance together with below average attainment in writing has a negative impact on pupils' future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory and improving. There are some examples of good, lively teaching but it is too infrequent to secure consistently good progress. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Teachers praise pupils appropriately and this increases their confidence. In many lessons practical resources and modern technology that have immediate relevance to the pupils are used well to capture their interest and support learning. Some lessons are carefully structured and move along at a good pace. In these lessons, pupils know exactly what they need to learn and teachers make frequent checks on whether pupils have understood properly. However, in some lessons, teachers have not clearly established what pupils are expected to learn and this makes it difficult for them to thoroughly check learning at the end of lessons. Pupils are sometimes given good guidance in lessons. However, target setting and marking are not always used effectively to give pupils specific information about how to improve their work.

The school has worked very hard on improving the curriculum. There is suitable provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Organising pupils into smaller groups according to their capability has reduced the ratio of pupils to teaching staff but within the groups, work is not always carefully matched to pupils' individual needs. The school is planning to enhance pupils' skills through the more creative use of topics but this development is still at an early stage. Partnership with other local schools has brought exciting opportunities for pupils, for example, through the Forest School initiative. There is now a good variety of interesting clubs ranging from sport to those designed to improve pupils' personal skills. The range of

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visits has also improved and pupils talk excitedly about going to local museums, theatres and other attractions. There is also a good range of courses available to parents to help them develop their own skills.

The school provides a very welcoming environment where its pupils feel safe and secure and know that they are valued as individuals. Good work by pastoral staff ensures that vulnerable pupils and their families are especially well supported and have full access to all that the school offers. This good support is enhanced by effective links with external agencies. The new inclusion manager has improved provision. Previously, some pupils had been removed from the special educational needs register too quickly and this limited their access to additional support. There are now better strategies to support pupils who are struggling with their work. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored and initiatives designed to improve attendance have been implemented. However, they have not always had the desired impact and there is more work to do with both pupils and parents to convince them of the importance of good attendance.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>3</b>
	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and governors are well aware that the school needs to improve further. With the help of teaching and support staff, they have secured improvements to pupils' attainment and progress and are determined that standards will continue to rise. They have therefore set challenging targets because their aspirations are high. The school's system of checking pupil's progress provides very good information about the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils but as yet, senior managers and teachers are not making good use of this information to support learning. An extensive programme of lesson observations has helped senior leaders to pinpoint weakness and improve the quality of teaching. Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. They discharge their statutory responsibilities including ensuring that safeguarding procedures are satisfactory and that the school promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination. However, governors and the senior leadership team understand there is more to do in order to effectively promote community cohesion.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*



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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is inadequate because the quality of provision is ineffective and outcomes are not good enough. The Early Years Foundation Stage framework is not well established in the Nursery and as a result, children are not receiving an interesting and stimulating curriculum. The assessment of what children know and can do is not accurate and insufficient use is made of the available information to plan activities that stimulate their learning. Opportunities for outdoor play are not fully utilised. There is too little support for children who are working independently. The leaders have reviewed provision including the way that children's skills on entry are judged. Inspection evidence supports the senior leaders' judgement that children's skills are below what are expected on entry. Both provision and outcomes have been rigorously analysed and, in partnership with the local authority, challenging but achievable plans for improvement are being developed. Recent changes in the Reception classes have benefited the children and demonstrate that leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Induction procedures have been revised and help children to settle quickly into school. A comprehensive audit of welfare requirements has been made and any shortcomings have been addressed. Due to the diligence and prompt action of the new leadership team, important welfare requirements have now been met in full.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Very few parents had any individual concerns. However a few would like the school to take more account of their suggestions and concerns.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ladypool Primary 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 174 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 480 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	105	60	67	39	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	105	60	67	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	95	55	73	42	9	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	87	50	73	42	9	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	94	54	75	43	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	79	45	86	49	5	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	89	51	75	43	5	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)	89	51	72	41	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	69	40	93	53	5	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	77	44	82	47	7	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	41	74	43	19	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	80	46	83	48	7	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	94	54	75	43	1	1	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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



11 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ladypool Primary School, Birmingham, B11 1QT

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when my colleagues and I visited your school. You told us that you feel safe and that staff always help if you have problems. It is good that you are trying hard to eat healthily and enjoy exercise. The School Council and the Eco Committee are doing a good job. We looked at the pictures of the wild flowers and vegetables in your new garden and thought they looked wonderful. It's good to know that you have a good range of clubs that you enjoy so much. It must have been terrific to sing at the Birmingham Symphony Hall and to appear on television.

We judged that your school needs to improve some things. Children do not get off to a good start, especially in the Nursery class, and by the end of Year 6 you are not doing as well as children in other schools. You are doing better every year but there is still some way to go before you catch up. Many of the older pupils produce some really interesting writing but we have asked your teachers to help them to make sure that their writing always makes sense and that their spelling, grammar and punctuation are correct.

You are sometimes set work that is too easy for you and occasionally it is too hard. We have asked your teachers to improve this and to make sure that you know exactly what you are expected to learn in each lesson and check your learning at the end. We noticed that teachers do not always tell you how to improve your work and how to reach your targets. We could see that you are proud of your school and your heritages but you do not have enough opportunities to learn about others from different backgrounds.

You told us that you 'love school' but many of you do not come to school regularly enough. You can all help by making sure you come to school as often as you can so that you do not have big gaps in your learning. We know that the school's leaders are trying hard to make things better. Another inspector will visit in a few months time to check how much things have improved.

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh

Additional Inspector

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