

Minworth Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103345
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336062
Inspection dates	17-18 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Kath Campbell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Michelle Holland
Headteacher	Mrs Josie Leese
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited eight lessons, held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils and talked to parents. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including responses to 72 parental and 81 pupil questionnaires.

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

- what the school was doing to encourage pupils, particularly boys, to become skilled writers in their formative years
- girls' achievement in mathematics and more able pupils' achievement in English and science in KS2
- how well teachers used assessment information to help pupils improve
- the effectiveness of the interim leadership team in moving the school forward during a period of change.

Information about the school

Minworth is a smaller than average primary school which serves an urban community on the outskirts of Birmingham. The school's numbers are rising rapidly, with more pupils being admitted from outside the village and local community. Almost all pupils are of White British background and all have English as their first language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The school has received a number of awards in recognition of its work. These include Healthy Schools and Investors in People.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Minworth is a satisfactory school with strengths in the good personal development and pastoral care of pupils. There is a strong sense of community and pupils enjoy school. The acting headteacher and senior leadership team are successfully maintaining a positive climate for learning during a period of change. The school has a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses but is sometimes over generous in its self-evaluation, for example, of the quality of teaching. There is a shared determination among staff to provide well for the pupils in their care.

By the time pupils leave, they typically reach average standards. Past test and assessment data indicate that progress across the school is satisfactory. However, in Key Stage 1, more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should, particularly when they are not sufficiently challenged. The picture in Key Stage 2 is more positive, with year-on-year improvement due largely to outstanding teaching in Year 6. Weaknesses in mathematics found at the time of the previous inspection have been fully addressed, with pupils currently making good progress. The school is very aware that writing is not such a success story and that standards are typically below average. Although many initiatives have been tried, none has impacted sufficiently on standards. The weaknesses in writing are evident in pupils' current work.

Teaching, learning and the curriculum are satisfactory. The staff work well together and make learning fun. They have very good relationships with pupils and, in return, most pupils want to do their best. Most lessons are lively and interesting. Occasionally, however, teachers do not ask enough of pupils or evaluate with enough precision what different groups of pupils have learned in lessons. Consequently, their planning does not always enable pupils to build effectively on previous learning. The curriculum is in the process of change. More exciting and challenging activities, designed to add to pupils' enjoyment, combined with a more creative approach, are at the developmental stage. A good range of extra-curricular clubs does much to promote positive attitudes. Good enrichment opportunities and strong links with partner institutions enable pupils to be healthy and active.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. Pupils' welfare is very important and personal and social development is a priority. Senior leaders and, to a lesser extent governors, monitor the work of the school satisfactorily, although not always with enough rigour or precision. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The school's focus is now, rightly, on raising attainment through consistently good teaching and evaluating the impact on how well pupils achieve with greater precision. The capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory. However, the process of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work is often over reliant on the expertise of senior managers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- During the current academic year, raise standards in writing throughout the school by ensuring pupils are given more opportunities:
 - to develop into confident independent writers in Key Stage 1
 - to develop writing skills through other subjects
 - to develop greater maturity in their writing as they get older through more sustained writing activities.
- Raise attainment of more able pupils in Key Stage 1 by ensuring:
 - teachers' expectations of pupils' capabilities are high enough
 - work is more accurately matched to pupils' needs, interests and abilities
 - more able pupils are given greater opportunity to develop independent thinking skills.
- Develop greater consistency in the teachers' use of assessment information by:
 - focusing more effectively on the learning of different groups
 - involving pupils more in evaluating how much they have learned
 - checking pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve.

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.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In the 2008 national tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils made satisfactory progress from their starting points, although the small group of girls in this cohort did not make as much progress as boys in mathematics. Not enough pupils achieved higher levels in English and science. Inspection observations focused on the progress of different groups and found boys and girls currently achieving equally well. Scrutiny of the 2009 test results showed good improvement in the number of pupils reaching higher levels in all subjects, although writing remained the weakest area.

Observations in Key Stage 1 focused on standards in writing and on whether more able pupils were being sufficiently challenged. No pupils in last year's small cohort reached higher levels and writing was an issue. Inspection observations showed that, although progress is satisfactory, initiatives designed to accelerate learning, including individualised support for pupils, have not yet impacted fully on attainment. Teachers' expectations of the more able are sometimes too low. Heavy reliance on worksheet based activities does little to develop thinking skills and there are too few opportunities for pupils to become confident, independent writers. These weaknesses came through most strongly in the scrutiny of pupils' past work.

In lessons, pupils display positive attitudes towards learning. Most pupils behave very well, although some parents and pupils are rightly concerned by the challenging behaviour of a few older boys. Relationships are strong and are key to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils are attentive, cooperate well and participate enthusiastically in discussion. Most develop into confident and mature individuals.

Pupils say they feel safe and that, although incidents of bullying do occur, they are mostly dealt with promptly and efficiently. Pupils feel they have a valued voice through their school council. A good example of strengths in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was observed when pupils came together for their 'Celebration' assembly. The shared sense of respect was impressively good. Attendance has been an on-going issue. Evidence shows that swine 'flu and adverse winter weather severely affected attendance last year.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Lessons throughout the school are enjoyable and teachers and support staff always try to respond to a complex range of needs. However, although teaching is satisfactory overall, with outstanding practice, its quality is not consistent enough to promote good learning. Where teaching is at its best, pupils of all abilities are engrossed in their work because activities are closely matched to their needs. Expectations are high and pupils are constantly challenged to think and justify their answers. Less effective practice is characterised by too much talking by teachers, leaving little time for pupils to advance their skills. Work is often marked carefully but marking does not always guide pupils sufficiently to the next steps. Assessment is satisfactory overall, but not yet fully recognised by all teachers as an important tool in raising standards.

The school carefully thinks through adaptations to its curriculum in order to meet the needs of its changing intake. It succeeds in motivating boys through its choice of topics. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities very effectively, enabling them to enjoy success. Pupils say they enjoy practical work and sporting activities are firm favourites. Swimming is a strong

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

feature of provision. Themed events and good use of visits and visitors enhance learning and successfully bring the curriculum alive.

The good quality of care, guidance and support establishes secure foundations for good personal development. High levels of commitment to welfare ensure that pupils feel secure and happy in school. Adults and pupils show respect for each other because they get on well. A good range of support mechanisms for vulnerable and 'hard to reach' pupils successfully develops their self-esteem. Families with emotional and social needs also receive a high level of support. However, further work remains to be done to improve attendance. The school's monitoring procedures were found not to be sufficiently tight to promote good attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Until recently, staffing instability has not allowed the school to move forward as quickly as it would have liked. Although the picture is more settled now, the headteacher is currently on maternity leave. In the interim, the acting leadership team have maintained stability and are in a satisfactory position to bring about improvement. They show a determined commitment towards raising standards and overall school performance. There is a good climate for future development and staff share their ambition and drive. The role of middle managers, many of whom are new to their posts, is in the process of development. They do not yet have a clear enough overview of achievement and standards. The governing body is well organised and has an adequate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is, however, greater scope for governors to evaluate the outcomes of the school's work at first hand in order to support improvement more effectively. The school's process of monitoring, self-evaluation and future planning, although satisfactory, occasionally lacks rigour and precision.

The school's purposeful relationships with parents and carers make a good contribution to the care and well-being of pupils. Sound safeguarding procedures ensure pupils' welfare is a high priority. The school is strongly inclusive and values each pupil as an individual. The monitoring of academic performance of different groups, though developing, has some way to go before it is fully effective in maximising the potential of individual pupils.

The school's strategies to promote community cohesion are developing well at both a local and international level. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. Provision has been recently reviewed. Productive links with a Ugandan school are firmly established and other links in the wider community are to be

implemented in the near future.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children currently entering the Early Years Foundation Stage have levels of skills, knowledge and understanding slightly below those expected of this age. Overall, through satisfactory teaching, most children are close to expected levels for their age by the time they move into Year 1. They enjoy their time in the Reception class because staff provide a friendly welcoming environment into which they can settle quickly. Good relationships with families enable parents and carers to be actively involved in their children's education right from the start. The strong focus on developing children's personal, social and emotional skills successfully enables children to work and play together with increasing confidence. Children make good progress in this area of learning because it is taught well. The safety and welfare of children is very important and healthy lifestyles are promoted well. Children are valued as individuals, enabling all groups to enjoy success. Staff set very good examples to the children in their care. They work together effectively to organise an exciting range of activities that children thoroughly enjoy, both indoors and, to a lesser extent, outside. They plan a well-balanced range of adult led and child-initiated activities that meet the needs of most children. The good ratio of adults to children ensures those who are potentially vulnerable or who need extra support enjoy success because they receive individual attention. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The Early Years Foundation Stage is in the process of reviewing and amending its work. The school has rightly identified the need for more precise assessment data, more individualised programmes of work and a more effective outdoor learning area as its priorities for development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Minworth J & I 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspector received 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 143 pupils registered at the school.

Parents & Carers		Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Q1	My child enjoys school	43	60%	29	40%	0	0%	0	0%
Q2	The school keeps my child safe	46	64%	26	36%	0	0%	0	0%
Q3	The school informs me about my child's progress	40	56%	31	43%	0	0%	0	0%
Q4	My child is making enough progress at this school	33	46%	34	47%	4	6%	0	0%
Q5	The teaching is good at this school	37	51%	34	47%	1	1%	0	0%
Q6	The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	47%	34	47%	3	4%	0	0%
Q7	The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	53%	32	44%	1	1%	0	0%
Q8	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)	32	44%	38	53%	1	1%	0	0%
Q9	The school meets my child's particular needs	31	43%	35	49%	4	6%	0	0%
Q10	The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	46%	29	40%	6	8%	2	3%
Q11	The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	38%	38	53%	5	7%	0	0%
Q12	The school is led and managed effectively	36	50%	34	47%	1	1%	0	0%
Q13	Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	57%	29	40%	2	3%	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 all 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

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 pupils' 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.



19 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Minworth Junior and Infant School, Sutton Coldfield,
B76 9BU

Thank you for looking after me so well when I visited your school. It was good to talk to you, see your work and listen to your views.

My letter tells you what is in my full report.

You are part of a very caring school that provides a satisfactory level of education.

Here are some of the things I liked most.

- You enjoy your time in school.
- You make satisfactory progress with your work in Years 1 to 5 and quick progress in Year 6.
- Nearly all of you told me how much you like your lessons.
- Most of you behave well and work hard.

I agree with your teachers that your school needs to:

- help you to improve your writing by making sure you have time to practise and improve your skills
- give some of you harder work, especially those of you who are good at literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2
- make sure the work you are given is just right for you and you know what you need to do next to improve.

You can help your teachers by coming to school regularly, behaving well and working hard.

Yours faithfully

Kath Campbell
Lead Inspector

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