

# Lindens Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104212
<b>Local Authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	336255
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Carrington

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

---

<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>	335
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tony Beason
<b>Headteacher</b>	Simon Griffiths
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Hundred Acre Road Streetly Sutton Coldfield B74 2BB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 353 9273
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 353 8696
<b>Email address</b>	postbox@lindens.walsall.sch.uk

---

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They spent about two thirds of their time looking at pupils' learning, including visits to 23 lessons and observations of 14 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at school self-evaluation documents, external monitoring reports and development planning. Inspectors analysed 161 parental questionnaires as well as those from school staff and a sample of pupils.

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

- the continued improvement of achievement by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, higher attainers and those from minority ethnic backgrounds
- the start level of children in Nursery, their progress and their attainment when they leave Reception
- the effectiveness of all tiers of leadership, especially middle managers, in driving continued improvement through their monitoring and evaluation work
- procedures to check, evaluate and update the school's approach to community cohesion and its effectiveness.

## Information about the school

Lindens Primary School is larger than most primary schools. About three quarters of the pupils are from White British backgrounds; the other quarter come from a variety of minority ethnic groups, but are mainly from Indian backgrounds. A broadly average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. A below average proportion of pupils in the main school have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most of these pupils have some form of learning difficulty. There is also specialist provision for a maximum of 10 pupils with physical difficulties and/or profound medical needs.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Nursery and Reception classes. They also attend the Four Seasons out-of-school childcare sessions which are managed by the school. This provision was inspected by the team.

The school has been awarded Healthy School and Activemark Gold status.

**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?**

**1**

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

**1**

## Main findings

Lindens is an outstanding school. Most parents and carers share the views written by one of them: 'The school goes beyond their call of duty to help us. We are very lucky to have (our child) in an excellent school.'

The school has maintained a rapid rate of improvement over recent years. This is due to dedicated, inspirational and hard-working leaders. In the first place, this has come from the highly talented headteacher. He has ensured staff at all levels have aspirations to do the best for the pupils and to tackle all forms of weakness. The governors are fully part of the quest for ever-better provision and results. The excellent school ethos is apparent from the moment one walks through the door. It is charged with fun, very high-quality learning and enthusiasm to meet challenges.

Pupils' progress has accelerated steadily over the last few years. It is now outstanding because pupils make great gains in their learning across all dimensions of the first-rate curriculum. Thus, attainment in the core areas of English and mathematics is consistently above average. Similarly, standards in the arts and sports subjects are especially high, in part due to the powerful partnerships that have been formed with outside specialists. Pupils are enthusiasts for learning. They work purposefully, productively and maturely in lessons and enjoy the numerous challenges set for them each day. Their workbooks show a very positive picture of achievement over a long period. Children in Nursery and Reception are equally successful learners and they too make exceptional progress.

The outstanding progress extends to pupils' personal development. The superb care, guidance and support provided for all pupils ensures that behaviour is exceptionally good, relationships are based on trust and respect, and effort is recognised and celebrated. Pupils have everything necessary to move on to the next stage of their education, whether this is excellent achievement, remarkable enterprise or natural confidence. The school's rising reputation is also marked by the high esteem in which parents and carers hold its work with vulnerable pupils. The support, encouragement and care given to the pupils with profound medical or physical needs are a model for others to follow. Pupils across the school identify with and support these children. They nurture and protect them and fully understand their needs. For example, in an innovative move, the local nurse taught all of them about a particular medical condition so they could respond confidently and appropriately should the symptoms arise. They do this magnificently.

Given this picture of pupils' achievement, it almost goes without saying that teaching is first class. Lesson observations and the close study of pupils' workbooks show that, from

**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

time to time, outstanding teaching is enjoyed by everyone. Expertly judged pace, high expectations and good levels of challenge are all evident in lessons. There are good opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning and the work in books shows that in some classes this is honed to a fine art. School leaders recognise that such outstanding practice is not yet consistent in all classes.

The very many strengths of the school are the result of the profound rigour, sense of purpose and expectations of all leaders and the governors. Community cohesion is promoted with ease. This is because there is regular, robust evaluation of its many successes and very few drawbacks, constant updating of approaches and full focus on local, nationwide and global communities. Displays around the school celebrate diversity, discrimination is eliminated and every pupil in the school community has excellent opportunities to show their talents and build on their achievement. They can do this secure in the knowledge that they are safeguarded thoroughly. Risks are calculated precisely; so for example, when a Year 6 pupil says, as she leaves school for a 'Spooks' (ghost hunting) theme visit, 'I am enjoying it but I am a little bit worried', this is a true reflection of the school's intentions. The pupils face the unknown with confidence because staff have taken every possibility into account.

The school's great capacity to maintain the momentum of improvement soon becomes evident. There is no complacency; rather, there is a sense of fun, adventure and enquiry into ways in which provision and pupils' achievement can be made even better.

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

- Make sure that the dialogue between teachers and pupils about learning and progress is a key feature of written and spoken assessment in every class.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Attainment continues to rise. Statistically, the results of national tests in English, writing, reading and science are above average. Across the range of subjects, attainment is sometimes higher, notably in art, music and physical education. Progress is rapid. It shows, for example, in the achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups, the more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' workbooks show the great strides made from early September to early February. There are times when presentation and handwriting could be better, especially for the older pupils, but spelling, grammar and fluency are all very good, whether in writing or speech. Pupils are skilled in problem solving and investigation in mathematics and science. They also develop accomplished creative skills.

There is great self-esteem, confidence and maturity among the pupils. There is also politeness, consideration, tolerance and companionship, as shown to pupils with profound medical needs or physical disabilities. Pupils place their own health high in their own priorities for a successful lifestyle. They are particularly eloquent about the contribution that regular sports, games and physical activity make to their well-being. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all aspects of school life and this is reflected in their above

**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

average attendance, spot-on punctuality and buzz of excitement in lessons.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

The school's assessment of teaching quality is accurate. Most of the time teaching is good or better. Lessons are stimulating, enjoyable and full of hands-on learning. Pupils are committed workers who show great independence, working sensibly when on their own or in small groups. They are very productive and purposeful learners. A significant factor in learning is that the pupils ask each other as many questions as they answer.

The school's skilfully personalised curriculum is writ large. Displays are virtually all of pupils' own work. The 'Linden Marbles' display in the entrance is worthy of the British Museum. The knitting project with the local Women's Institute has resulted in a web of design where colour and form meld together to produce an eye-catching display. It also represents the school's excellent partnership with outside agencies, which extends to its outreach work and sponsorship from the business community.

The sterling care, guidance and support provided for every pupil is recognised by parents and carers. It is a chief element in their statement on the questionnaire that

---

<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.

**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

they are happy with their child's experience at Lindens. The school recognises that it is successful in these matters because parents and carers join staff in working for the best for their children. The partnership with parents and carers is a considerable strength. Care, guidance and support are strengthened further by the contribution from teaching assistants and specialist staff, such as those who lead the provision for pupils with profound medical and physical needs. The non-teaching staff know the pupils as individuals and work in the background to make sure the school functions effectively in meeting the diverse needs of all the pupils.

The Four Seasons out-of-school childcare sessions add to the excellent qualities of the curriculum and care, guidance and support. These sessions are very well managed and the activities are chosen wisely to help the children build on their successes in lessons. The conditions of registration are met fully. Four Seasons provision is another component of the school's eminent overall effectiveness.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

As in most schools, all staff have a leadership and management role of one kind or another. At Lindens they all fulfil their responsibilities efficiently and skilfully. It is for this reason that pupils' achievement in school is not just the result of their current teacher's contribution, outstanding as it is, but is cumulative from day one to the time they leave. This is one of the major shifts in the school's effectiveness from the past and the reason why the school gives excellent value for money.

Senior leaders know exactly what is working well and what needs enhancing. This extends to the governors and the subject leaders. Self-evaluation is probing. Improvement planning is decisive. Improvement priorities are the right ones for the school. Improvement action is highly successful and the impact is seen everywhere. There is a regular cycle of 'check and evaluate', for example of the vigorous safeguarding procedures. Site security and safety are audited vigilantly, staff vetting is watchful and vulnerable pupils' needs are met with sensitivity and, where needed, tenderness.

Pupils know much about the world and its peoples. This understanding is accumulated as much in their arts-based education as it is in their personal development. Thus, the school promotes community cohesion equally effectively in all aspects of its work. The development of tolerance, harmony and respect run throughout pupils' time in school.

**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

The school is a united community where every pupil is successful, valued and cherished.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Nursery and Reception children are at ease in their learning and have much fun. The puppet theatre in Nursery is enjoyed by all. It is the resourceful use of such equipment that demonstrates the real strength of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The children clamour to give a puppet show and others are very content to form the audience. The interaction between puppeteers and audience is constant and so the children's confidence, speaking skills and relationships all benefit significantly. The puppeteers are so eager that the audience often sees more of their faces than they do the puppets. Laughter is everywhere.

Outstanding leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has given rise to high-quality provision. In Reception, for example, children move freely from activity to activity and zone to zone, including outdoors. They have a well-developed sense of adventure in doing this. Two children crept stealthily to the toilet so that the inspector and headteacher 'would not see us'. Day by day the children's experiences mount and enable them to widen their horizons, to build skills and new knowledge systematically and to live and learn alongside others. Their progress is outstanding across all six areas of learning and most leave Reception with the expected, or better, level of competence. Since many children start with significant gaps in their knowledge and skill, this is testament to the excellent start they have in school.



**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

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are nearly unanimous in saying their children enjoy school, which tallies with the pupils' own views on their questionnaire. Pupils are 100% sure of this. Parents are equally assured about the safety and security of their children and the leadership of the school. In all these cases, inspectors agree with the parents and carers.

A handful of parents and carers have concerns about the management of behaviour and the information that is shared with them about their children's progress. Inspectors can reassure these parents and carers that behaviour is managed superbly and that any incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with decisively. Inspectors also find that the school provides good guidance for parents and carers about progress. It is not complacent though, and is actively seeking ways to improve this.

The 161 questionnaires returned represent a very good proportion of families and give strength to the positive views held. Comments added to the questionnaires underline the appreciation and thanks communicated by many. 'I feel our family is part of the school' sums it all up neatly.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lindens 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 161 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	87	54	70	43	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	87	54	74	46	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	55	34	91	57	12	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	74	46	73	45	9	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	81	50	70	43	8	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	33	96	60	7	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	39	92	57	3	2	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)	57	35	81	50	11	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	75	47	76	47	7	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	62	39	72	45	11	7	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	65	40	74	46	10	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	85	53	73	45	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	99	61	55	34	6	4	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.**



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lindens Primary School, Streetly B74 2BB

We were bowled over by the warmth of your welcome when we visited your school recently. You were polite, extremely well behaved and very friendly. Thank you for the help you gave us in finding out about your excellent school.

Those of you in Year 6 shared your 'Spoooc' investigations with us. You were last seen boarding a coach to take you exploring. As one of you said, 'I am enjoying it but I am a little bit worried.' We hope you came back happily ' we are sure you did. The 'Spoooc' work is one example of why your education is great fun and exciting. There are many other excellent things about Lindens.

- You all do extremely well in your work and reach above average standards in English and mathematics, and very high standards in art, music and physical education.
- You really enjoy working and playing with other children and you look after each other very well indeed.
- You are taught expertly, so your lessons are full of hard work but are also entertaining.
- Your teachers and all the other staff look after you very carefully, so you are kept safe and healthy.
- Your parents and carers think your school is the best. They are really pleased you attend Lindens.
- Your headteacher works all the time to make sure you are successful at school. All the other adults help him to make sure this comes true.

There is just one main thing that we have asked your teachers to improve:

- Make sure you have lots of chances to talk and write about what you have learned in lessons and how well you are doing.

You showed us just how much you like school. We know you will want to help your teachers make this improvement. You can start by making a list of what is best about your school and what you think could be improved. Share the list with your parents, carers and teachers. We wish you great success in your education.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**