

Loxdale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104315
Local Authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	336283
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter Kerr

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Wright
Headteacher	Mrs P Scott
Date of previous school inspection	3 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and held meetings with staff, governors and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at lesson plans, monitoring documents and some of the pupils' books.

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

- The progress made by different groups of pupils
- The quality of learning in each key stage
- How pupils use their skills in different subjects.

Information about the school

Loxdale Primary school serves an area of mostly White British families. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic groups and most of these speak English. A very small number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high, at twice the national average figure. More than one in three pupils is identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is a higher proportion than nationally. There is relatively little movement of pupils in and out of the school. The school has achieved the following awards: Active Mark; Sports Mark; Healthy Schools Status; Financial Management Standard.

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

The school is good. The headteacher has established stability and a strong sense of shared ambition following a period of rapid staff turnover which had contributed to a sharp fall in attainment in 2008. Self-evaluation is rigorous. Very effective analysis of weaknesses and rapid targeted intervention brought standards up to average levels in 2009, and achievement is good. The insight the leaders have into the strengths and weaknesses of the school, the improvements they have made so far, their determination as a team to succeed and the whole-hearted support of the governors give the school a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The children settle quickly and happily into the Early Years Foundation Stage and get off to a good start. This good momentum is maintained though Key Stage 1, but attainment remains below average at the end of Year 2 because of the low starting point for many pupils. Progress in Key Stage 2 is good overall, but better for middle and lower attaining pupils than for the more able. Teaching too is good, but where it has weaknesses these are about giving consistent challenge to this more able group. In some Key Stage 2 classes, teaching does not make enough use of the good assessment information available to build on pupils' existing skills, particularly for independent investigation and research. The curriculum, though satisfactory, is not varied and interesting enough to consistently take learning to a higher level. Mathematics and English skills are covered well when taught directly but pupils are given limited opportunities to practice them in a range of other subjects. The pupils say they would like more art, music and physical education and are right to expect a more diverse curriculum experience. However, some good enrichment opportunities are provided, for example through instrumental tuition for all pupils in Year 4.

An outstanding feature of the school's provision is the quality of care, guidance and support offered to pupils and their families. Many parents and carers comment on how well the school knows their children and how well any difficulties are dealt with. The partnership between school and families is further enhanced by the range of opportunities adults have to help in the school. Safeguarding arrangements and health and safety procedures are outstanding. Pupils' good behaviour and willingness to learn helps lessons to run smoothly. They feel very safe and have excellent relationships. They hold many responsible roles within the school but have a limited understanding and appreciation of the more diverse wider community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve learning by:

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- making better use of assessment to accelerate progress for all groups of pupils
- ensuring that work is sufficiently challenging for more able pupils
- developing pupils' independent learning and enquiry skills and making more use of their own interests and ideas
- Widen the scope of the curriculum by:
 - allotting more curriculum time to other subjects and topics beyond literacy and numeracy
 - providing more planned opportunities to use basic literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects
 - promoting pupils' better understanding of more diverse communities.

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

Achievement is good. Year 6 results show that their progress in Key Stage 2 dipped to satisfactory in 2008 but returned in 2009 to the good level of 2007. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has improved more steadily and in 2009 it was broadly average. This too represents good progress from a low base, reflecting the school's targeted support. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress throughout the school because of the strong individual support they receive. Pupils who were higher attaining at the end of Year 2 maintained their above average attainment to the end of Year 6 in 2009. However, work samples and discussions with pupils indicate that more able pupils often find work relatively easy. They are successful in the different tasks they are given, for example by doing sums with bigger numbers than others, but they seldom use higher-level problem-solving skills. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive in all key stages. They behave well in lessons, much enjoy their work and co-operate effectively on set tasks. On the occasions when these are demanding enough, the pupils apply themselves diligently for lengthy periods.

Pupils are keen to live healthy lives, for example by walking and cycling to school as often as possible. They have a strong sense of community and undertake a wide range of responsibilities around the school, such as house captains and buddies for children in the Nursery and Reception. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They get on very well with each other regardless of age, gender, colour or ethnicity and have a good sense of right and wrong.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Inconsistent quality of teaching was a key issue at the last inspection. Some major weaknesses have been remedied and teaching is now good. However, it remains less consistent in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each teacher is now aware of the rate of progress in their own class and most are self-sustaining in securing good learning, as a result of good input from senior staff. In some classes, the school continues to give support to ensure good provision. Questioning is used well in lessons to judge pupils' understanding and to help them where necessary, but assessment is not used so well to plan work that ensures consistent challenge. In most lessons teachers use a good variety of techniques to hold the pupils' attention well and keep them busy. The marking of pupils' books is helpful and includes specific suggestions for improvement which the pupils often respond to. The school's necessary focus on reversing the decline in standards in literacy and numeracy has stalled progress towards a more diverse and exciting curriculum. Most activities are closely directed by staff and so pupils do not develop advanced independent research and investigation skills. However, the school has established good links with other schools to enrich the pupils' education, for example through specialised teaching of Spanish. Good information for parents on their children's progress complements the excellent pastoral support and guidance the pupils receive. The breakfast club is excellent and is very well-attended. It provides a very positive start to the school day for those who attend by engaging them in enjoyable games and activities such as table tennis. The site manager provides a good role model for boys in this setting and as a lunch-time supervisor. Excellent support is provided for vulnerable

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pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, either directly by the school or through relevant outside agencies.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

A strong sense of teamwork characterises the ethos of the school. The headteacher provides effective leadership and instils confidence in her team so that delegation is effective. Governors share the staff's ambitious aims and are taking steps to become better informed and more pro-active in shaping school improvements. Many parents testify to the effect the new leadership has had on improving behaviour and enriching the partnership with parents and carers. The welcome and encouragement extended to parents helps some of them overcome a reluctance to spend time in school and others to pursue further study and training. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities well. They ensure that the school has excellent quality assurance for safeguarding pupils. They review the school's promotion of equal opportunity effectively and take action. For example, they are actively seeking ways to strengthen the school's provision for pupils who have a different home language and are in the early stages of learning English. They rightly see the need to secure staff expertise in this area despite the fact that currently the very few pupils in this category make similar progress to other pupils. Governors and staff strongly promote community cohesion within the school and local community and a sense of responsibility within the wider world through charity fund-raising. Although the school contributes to a local multi-faith celebration, few steps have yet been taken to firmly establish an awareness and appreciation of diversity within the wider community. The headteacher has shown decisive leadership in raising expectations and governors have strongly supported steps to eliminate weak teaching. However, improving pupils' progress in some classes has required additional time and resourcing, and has diverted energy from developing the curriculum. Nevertheless, this use of resources has raised outcomes and the school gives good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	2

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 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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The nursery and reception classes provide children with a very welcoming and positive start to school. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below age-related expectations, especially in communication and language skills. The children make rapid progress, especially in their personal, social and emotional development and soon become confident independent learners. They enjoy choosing from the good range of activities planned and begin to relate confidently to staff and other children and adults. The stay and play sessions that have been introduced in both classes are of great benefit to the children and their families. Because of this positive experience many parents then make themselves available to accompany trips and help out generally in other ways. There is a good balance between child-initiated and teacher-directed activities, and staff track the children's development very closely as they play and learn. Daily reviews of their observations feed into planning the next day's activities and contribute to good records of the children's development. These show that despite good progress, attainment in key areas of language, literacy and mathematical development remain below average at the end of reception. The outdoor area offers good opportunities for children to play energetically on scooters, cycles and climbing apparatus. However, its impact is limited because it is not immediately accessible from both classrooms and so use of it has to be timetabled. Both teachers and classroom assistants are suitably trained and work together very effectively as a team to provide the best opportunities they can for the children.

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

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents have very positive views of the school. Many comments express appreciation for what the headteacher and staff do for them and their children. They appreciate the fact that either the headteacher or deputy is always available when school begins each morning and some commented on the support they had received in times of difficulty. One or two parents thought that poor behaviour was not properly dealt with. The inspection team saw no evidence of this and agrees with the vast majority of parents that behaviour is good and any poor behaviour, including bullying, is dealt with quickly and effectively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Loxdale 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 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 189 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	78	14	21	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	81	12	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	63	25	37	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	68	20	29	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	49	72	18	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	65	23	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	63	23	34	0	0	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)	42	62	24	35	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	65	23	34	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	57	23	34	5	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	50	31	46	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	43	63	24	35	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	71	19	28	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">■ 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.



12 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Loxdale Primary School, Bilston, WV14 0PH

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We were impressed with your politeness and good behaviour and the responsible way you help in the school, for example by being buddies to younger children. You told us that you feel very safe and well cared-for and that you enjoy coming to school. We found that your school had improved a lot over the last year and is now good. Your school has good leaders and your headteacher and the rest of the staff look after you exceptionally well. You are making good progress and achieving average standards at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. Teaching is good but we thought some of you could do even better if you were given harder work to do. So we have asked your headteacher to make more of your lessons challenging for all of you.

Some of you said you would like to spend more time doing art, music and PE. We agree and have asked your teachers to allocate more time to subjects other than English and mathematics. We have asked that you use your English and mathematics skills more in other subjects, use your own ideas more in your learning and do more things independently. We would also like you to be taught more about other communities in Britain and the wider world.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Peter Kerr

Lead Inspector

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