

Westminster Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130944
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	360167
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mehnaz Afzal
Headteacher	Maneer Samad
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors who observed 26 lessons, taught by 17 different teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Vice Chair of the Governing Body, the School Improvement Partner and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, looked at information about pupils' progress, pupils' work in their books, the school improvement plan and safeguarding procedures. In addition, inspectors analysed 75 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and staff and pupil surveys.

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

- Whether the progress and attendance of more-able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that of other groups in the school.
- How effective and consistent teaching and the use of assessment are in overcoming the legacy of underachievement.
- The impact of leadership in securing consistent improvement to outcomes.

Information about the school

Westminster is a larger than average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of Pakistani or other Asian origin with a substantial number from Black African and Black Afro-Caribbean backgrounds. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The school has National Healthy Schools status and Activemark. A high number of pupils join and leave the school in each key stage. There has been a significant turnover of staff in the recent past, including four headteachers in under four years prior to 2009. The current headteacher has been in post since January 2009 and the deputy headteacher since April 2009. Most other senior leaders have been appointed within the last year.

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

Westminster is a good school. Parents, carers and pupils very much appreciate the fact that it is a caring and welcoming place to be. Pupils achieve well academically and personally and make good progress. This results in part from good teaching and, in particular, from the outstanding drive for improvement provided by senior leaders. This is giving rise to a systematic transformation of the school's work.

The legacy of underachievement means that attainment is not yet as high as it could be, but pupils are rapidly making up for previously lost ground. Standards are now broadly average in the current Year 6 and there has been a marked increase in the number of more-able pupils reaching the higher National Curriculum levels. This improvement is the result of good, and occasionally outstanding, progress in most classes and good use of assessment to ensure that work is usually challenging enough, especially in English and mathematics.

Pupils enjoy school. They show very positive attitudes to learning and want to do well. They make a good contribution to the school and wider community; for example, one group contributed to designing the local playground and others belong to the Bangladeshi Youth Forum and Young People's Parliament. Pupils also show considerable respect and regard towards people who lead lives that are very different from their own.

Over the past year, senior leaders have successfully tackled the decline in the quality of teaching that took place following the last inspection. Through rigorous monitoring, they have eradicated inadequate teaching so that teaching is now at least good in nearly all lessons, with some outstanding teaching in English and mathematics. Teachers plan carefully to match work to pupils' different needs, are skilled at making lessons enjoyable and understand, in detail, just how much each pupil is learning. In a very small number of classes, teaching and pupils' progress are satisfactory rather than good. The school has identified, rightly, that pupils' individual targets do not yet provide sufficient challenge in a broad enough range of skills, and plans are currently being implemented to address this. The curriculum is satisfactory, though it is not flexible or innovative enough to reflect fully pupils' different interests and aptitudes. The school recognises this and has planned a new curriculum to inspire, engage and involve pupils more in contributing to their own learning. In addition, the curriculum for information and communication technology is not planned sufficiently well to build pupils' skills systematically in all subjects.

Exceptional leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher has also led to other significant improvements, especially in the past year, to a very wide range of issues that needed urgent attention. Attendance has greatly improved for example so that it is now broadly average and the school has exceeded attendance targets set by the local authority. The rapid increase in the amount of good teaching is particularly noticeable, although initiatives, intended to increase pupils' progress, are not yet firmly established in

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every class. Senior leaders have developed an excellent database of information about pupils' progress which enables them to analyse the progress of different groups in great detail and address any shortcomings promptly. This very effective self-evaluation has enabled accurate identification of issues on which to build and plan for further improvement. The capacity to improve is, therefore, good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching is consistently good in all classes
 - making sure that pupils' individual targets present sufficient challenge in a broader range of skills
 - fully establishing initiatives, intended to increase pupils' progress, in every class.
- Improve the curriculum, making it more relevant to pupils' different interests by:
 - implementing a more flexible programme to inspire, engage and involve pupils more in their learning
 - planning to ensure that pupils' information and communication technology skills are built systematically into all subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils join the school with attainment that is below average, and in some cases low, so that they achieve well to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. In almost all classes, progress is now good in English and mathematics and satisfactory in science. Pupils are making good overall progress in each key stage, although there is some variation in progress between individual classes. For example, in some classes, pupils have made more than double the expected rate of progress whereas in a very few others, their progress is satisfactory. Progress is good overall for all groups of pupils regardless of their ethnicity, level of spoken English, or special educational needs and/or disabilities. Lessons demonstrate that pupils are excited by their learning; they remain engaged and are keen to do well throughout. Their enjoyment is evident, for example, as they eagerly work together to finish timed tasks or to share their ideas. In an outstanding lesson, highly focused pupils learned how to 'use what I know to help me understand what I don't know', to quickly solve mathematical problems about proportion and ratio.

Pupils act responsibly around the school and are very polite. Occasionally, they can be unkind to each other on the playground although those who act as peer mediators generally resolve any conflict. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, several take additional exercise and eat more fruit and vegetables as a result of their improved understanding. Sports clubs are well attended. Pupils feel safe in school and behaviour is often outstanding in lessons, especially in the way pupils contribute thoughtfully and help each other to do well.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

Good, and substantially strengthened, care guidance and support procedures, have led to a rise in attendance, which is broadly average for the first time. In addition, these better procedures have resulted in significantly improved behaviour, which is one reason why good learning is now taking place. The learning mentor and the special educational needs coordinator provide good, effective support for those with a range of additional needs, including those who arrive with little spoken English. Pupils are now well prepared for the future, including the transition to secondary school, for example they belong to an innovative online forum with Year 6 pupils from other schools.

Teachers and teaching assistants have increasingly high expectations of what pupils can achieve and they plan accordingly. In most classes, accurate and well-used assessment means that lessons are tightly planned to suit all ability groups. Expected outcomes are explained very clearly to these different groups. Teachers are skilled at adapting lessons to make sure that pupils understand what they need to do. Pupils are very pleased to have individual targets which, make clear to them how to improve their work in English and mathematics lessons. The school has identified that these individual targets do not relate to all of the strands in a subject which is one reason why, for a few, the work sometimes lacks challenge. The current range of opportunities does ensure that pupils' skills build systematically and securely in most subjects. They use technology well, for example, researching information, word processing and producing video film. The use of information

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and communication technology is not yet planned well enough, however, across a range of subjects to be sure that pupils all reach their full potential.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have achieved a remarkable turnaround in the school, moving outcomes for pupils from inadequate in the past to good in the last twelve months. This has been achieved, in part, through establishing a rigorous evaluation of outcomes, based upon the excellent bank of information about pupils' progress. This, in turn, has enabled a wide range of essential priorities to be addressed effectively. Staff share the same ambition for improving attainment for pupils and are working strongly as a team to achieve this. Teaching and learning have improved substantially and the legacy of underachievement is rapidly being overcome. Middle managers are increasingly skilled and effective and their work has led, for example, to improved problem solving in mathematics. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Governing body members bring a wide range of suitable skills to the role and hold the school well to account for its outcomes. Equal opportunities are promoted well: the school is a very inclusive community and there is no evidence of any discrimination. Safeguarding procedures are of good quality, they are rigorously applied and reviewed regularly. The good promotion of community cohesion includes some outstanding links with the local community, including, for example, the programme for families which has enabled parents, carers and pupils from different backgrounds to meet and learn together. Links nationally and internationally are developing well.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Strong links with parents ensure that children have a smooth start in Nursery and Reception. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are below those expected for the age. The skills of a minority are very low, especially in communication, language, literacy and personal, emotional and social development. Children make good progress, particularly in their literacy skills. The development of their early writing skills has been enhanced by improvements in the teaching of sounds and letters, and skilled use of their home language is now leading to much more focused engagement by all groups. By the time they join Year 1, children's skills in literacy and numeracy, although below national averages, have developed well. Good teaching provides children with a wide range of interesting activities to help them learn effectively. These include engaging games to help them read, write and count as well as creative themes to help them investigate their surroundings. For example, children were entranced to count how many toys 'Santa' had in his sack and many of them could pick out the right number on a card. Although the range of activities is broad, there is not yet enough opportunity for children in Reception to take responsibility and extend their personal skills by choosing what to explore and learn for themselves. The curriculum is balanced appropriately between inside and outside learning, and staff are skilled at observing children's achievements and planning the next steps in their development. Good leadership and well-targeted staff development have ensured that assessment is more accurate and this, in turn, has secured a substantial improvement in the amount of progress children make.

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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

The number of parental questionnaires returned is relatively low, although those who responded are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and feel confident that their children are kept safe and enjoy school. Most parents and carers are very appreciative of the care the school takes, as one commented, 'I can count on the staff's support if I have any issues that need to be dealt with.' The concerns expressed by a few, including about progress and the quality of teaching, are addressed by the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Westminster 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 75 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 440 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	52	33	44	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	48	34	45	4	5	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	39	44	59	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	37	38	51	9	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	43	33	44	9	12	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	35	43	57	4	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	29	48	64	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	26	35	42	56	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	31	40	53	7	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	32	45	60	3	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	28	47	63	4	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	27	36	42	46	2	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	43	39	52	3	4	1	1

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.

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.



9 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westminster Primary School, Birmingham, B20 3PN

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons. Yours is a good school. There are many interesting things going on, just as you described. Senior staff do an excellent job in developing the school and this is an important reason why your work is getting better.

Enjoyable teaching helps you to make good progress in your lessons and we like the way you always try to do your best. To help this continue, we have asked your school to help some of you reach higher levels by:

- improving your personal targets to challenge each of you in more lessons
- making sure that all lessons are of the same good quality
- giving you a more flexible, creative curriculum to suit more of your interests
- planning to build on your computer skills systematically in all subjects

We are sure that you will discuss these ideas with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your thoughts.

The many responsibilities that you take on, as peer mediators and with recycling for example, are heartening. You were keen to tell us that the school keeps you safe and looks after you well. It is, therefore, very pleasing to see that you usually behave well although sometimes, a few of you are not as kind as you should be to others, especially on the playground. You show good respect and understanding towards those who have different beliefs and ways of living, which helps make your school a happy and welcoming community.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Potheary

Lead inspector

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