

Timberley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103269
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	355352
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2010
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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	427
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Cheshire
Headteacher	Maggie Rose
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who observed 25 lessons taught by a total of 14 teachers and four other adults. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, parents and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' progress and attendance, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, and the responses to 60 parental questionnaires and to the pupils' questionnaire.

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

- whether apparent improvements in achievement have been maintained, especially in Years 1 and 2
- whether actions to improve pupils' attendance are proving successful.

Information about the school

Timberley Primary is a very large school where the number of pupils on roll has risen significantly since the school was last inspected. Over half the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is a very high proportion. Most pupils come from a White British background, with small numbers from many other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is very high, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average. There are many more boys than girls in most year groups. The proportion of pupils joining the school part way through their education is much higher than in most other schools.

Since the school was last inspected it has achieved Healthy Schools status. Six teachers joined the school in the week prior to the inspection, four of whom are in their first year of teaching. The school has its own nursery, but children had not started attending at the time of this inspection.

The school shares its site with the Timberley Playgroup. This is privately managed and is subject to a separate inspection.

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

1

Main findings

This is a good school that has shown remarkable improvement since it was last inspected, and continues to improve under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. The school's evaluation of its own performance is both rigorous and highly accurate, providing the outstanding capacity to continue the school's improvement. Pupils' attainment is now above average because they make outstanding progress in Years 3 to 6, which builds upon their good progress in Years 1 and 2 and the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is in stark contrast to the previous inspection, where progress was satisfactory overall, but 'barely adequate' in Years 1 and 2. Almost all aspects of provision and outcomes have shown significant improvement because the school's leaders, including the governing body, focus unerringly on accurately identifying where weaknesses exist and then taking highly effective actions to rectify them. The most notable example of this is in the outstanding curriculum, which has improved progress dramatically in writing and is now being used as a model in other schools and local authorities. The school has successfully closed the gaps in performance between different groups in the school by identifying exactly what holds pupils back and then putting in place extra support to ensure that none are disadvantaged. Some pupils, originally identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, often outperform their peers because they continue to receive extra support long after they have caught up and should no longer be classed as having learning difficulties.

The school's successes are not limited to academic performance. The excellent curriculum and good care that the school provides ensure that pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles and contribution to the community are outstanding. Pupils also feel exceptionally safe, a view that is overwhelmingly supported by parents. Pupils have a comprehensive understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using computers, for example, and have total confidence in staff to help with any problems they may have. One reason for pupils' confidence in the school is that their views are listened to and valued. For example, representatives from all groups help to draw up the school's code of conduct and are involved in planning the curriculum. Pupils were very keen to point out to inspectors the topics that they had asked for, and to explain why. They are particularly proud of their garden, which they requested in order to improve their healthy eating. They now grow their own produce and keep chickens, selling fresh vegetables and eggs to parents in order to make a practical contribution to promoting healthy lifestyles for others, with any profits going towards improving aspects of the school that pupils themselves have identified. The take up of healthy school meals is far in excess of the national average.

The one aspect that holds the school back is pupils' attendance and punctuality. Attendance is barely average and too many pupils arrive late. While the school has had some success in targeting pupils with support from an attendance worker, not enough pupils are involved and, for some, bad habits become entrenched before the school has

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intervened. The school has plans to increase the incentives available for good attendance and punctuality, and to raise the profile of the importance of regular attendance in school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attendance to 95% by September 2011 and improve pupils' punctuality by:
 - making more effective use of data to identify emerging trends in individual pupils' attendance and punctuality
 - contacting parents at an earlier stage as concerns arise
 - targeting more pupils for specific support from attendance workers
 - providing more incentives for good attendance
 - raising the profile in school of the importance of regular attendance.
- Ensure that pupils are removed from the register of pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties when they no longer require extra support to maintain their progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children join the nursery with skills and knowledge that are well below the levels expected for their age. Good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 ensure that their attainment is improved, and they start Year 3 with average attainment. Many new pupils join the school in Years 3 to 6, and the majority of these do so with levels of attainment that are below average. For example, one in three of the pupils who left Year 6 last year had joined the school late. Nevertheless, this cohort left with attainment that was above average in English and mathematics, and high in science. They made outstanding progress, given their below average starting points, and this maintained the pattern evident in previous years. Boys now do equally as well as girls, and there are no differences in the progress of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. The progress of pupils new to the school or with special educational needs and/or disabilities was particularly impressive, with some making accelerated progress in order to catch up with their peers.

The progress observed by inspectors in lessons was good, rather than outstanding. The majority of classes were taught by teachers new to the school, who had only met some of their classes once or twice before. Nevertheless, pupils' outstanding enjoyment of solving problems shone through, such as when working out the amounts of ingredients needed for a banquet at Hogwarts, and keenly discussed opposing views on how to calculate them. Sometimes pupils became a little over-enthusiastic and the teacher had to intervene to ensure all were sticking to the task. Pupils usually applied themselves very well to their work, wanting to do their best, but their attention wandered when the task was too easy or hard. However, they always behaved well in lessons, and demonstrated good manners and consideration for others at breaktimes.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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

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 teaching was observed during the inspection. Pupils are assessed accurately and frequently, and the results are used to ensure that expectations of what can be achieved are high. Over half the teachers observed were new to the school and still getting used to the capabilities of their pupils, which meant that tasks were not always pitched at the right level for individuals. Nevertheless, the teaching has several notable strengths. Pupils love the way that topics are presented in order to make learning fun, such as the teacher acting out the part of someone whose house has burnt down in the Great Fire of London, or groups of teachers setting up a Victorian school room. Discipline is strict, but fair, and respected by the pupils. Teaching assistants are used particularly well to support those who are struggling to understand and keep up in lessons, so they can progress equally as well as others.

The curriculum is full of memorable experiences, such as residential visits for pupils from Year 2 onwards or pupils handling real artefacts when they become history detectives. The improvement in writing has been so pronounced because literacy skills are woven into much of what the school provides, either through linked subjects or dedicated weeks, such as poetry week. In addition to the standard curriculum, there are many extras: additional lessons are provided for pupils new to the school or those who are falling behind, amounting to an additional two hours teaching each week. The range of clubs is vast, with over 95% of pupils attending because the school has asked them what they wanted to do

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and then made provision for it. Over 100 pupils regularly attend breakfast club, which has significantly reduced the incidence of illness caused by pupils having nothing to eat in the mornings. Physical education is provided by specialist coaches who are employed by the school to further promote healthy lifestyles.

The school has a very caring ethos which is informed by the senior managers' exceptional knowledge of each pupil's circumstances. Support for potentially vulnerable pupils has been particularly effective in improving their achievement, especially the behaviour and attitudes of those with emotional difficulties. The support for pupils moving classes and on to secondary school is highly praised by pupils, all of whom felt well prepared for any changes. Those new to the school are given posts of responsibility, which helps them to integrate more quickly into the life of the school, and one-to-one tuition to make sure they make up any work missed.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

This school is being driven forward at a terrific pace by leaders who set demanding targets and motivate the staff to achieve them. The school has an excellent track record of improving teachers' performance through a highly structured approach to their professional development, based upon accurate monitoring. The result is seen in strong morale throughout the school, with all staff wanting to do their very best in order to provide an even better education for the pupils. Equality is at the heart of the school's work, and its outstanding success is seen in the way that the performance of groups who typically do not perform as well as others has been boosted to ensure that all achieve outstandingly well. The school is a very harmonious community of pupils from a very diverse range of backgrounds. Racist incidents have been reduced to practically nil, and other examples of oppressive behaviour are now extremely rare. This is also a reflection of the good provision for community cohesion. The pupils play a strong role in the local community, meeting and working with adults, the elderly and children with disabilities. There are many strong links with a partner school that has pupils from different backgrounds to those at Timberley and these have been effective in tackling stereotypical views of other cultures. The school has plans in place to improve its international work, with links planned with a school in Egypt.

The school adopts good practice across all areas of safeguarding, with only a few minor amendments to policies required, most of which had been addressed by the time the inspectors left the school.

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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	1
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	1
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

Just as in the rest of the school, attainment and progress is improving in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and attainment is now very close to the level expected for their age when they start Year 1. Although no nursery children were present for the inspection, the school's accurate assessment and record keeping shows that children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes. The school has taken the unusual approach to starting children earlier than usual in the Nursery, which has boosted progress and attainment. With one of the two teachers new to the school, the manager has wisely decided to put both reception classes together in order to keep a close eye on children's progress and also to provide an excellent role model for others to follow.

Good links with parents, including an excellent welcome pack, ensure that children settle quickly into routines. They work and play happily together in a caring and safe environment. Lessons always promote social development, so progress in this aspect is particularly good, and there is a consistently strong emphasis on health. However, opportunities to consistently promote skills in other areas of learning, such as counting, are sometimes missed when the focus is on other aspects, such as literacy. Good use is made of the outdoor area, especially the forest school provision, where children love to plan their own adventures. Overall, there is a good balance between those activities led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves, and the children very much enjoy their learning.

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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

Around half the families with children in the school returned the inspection questionnaire. Parents are very positive indeed about all the school has to offer and the progress their children make. In particular, they praise the headteacher, the support for potentially vulnerable pupils, and the quality of teaching.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Timberley 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 427 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	73	15	25	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	73	15	25	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	67	20	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	63	20	33	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	68	19	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	63	20	33	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	67	18	30	0	0	1	2
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)	36	60	23	38	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	60	22	37	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	65	16	27	3	5	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	50	26	43	2	3	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	40	67	18	30	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	75	15	25	0	0	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

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.



15 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Timberley Primary School, Birmingham, B34 7RL

Thank you for all the help that you gave us when we visited your school. We found you to be polite, well-behaved and a pleasure to talk to. You are clearly very proud of your work in promoting healthy eating, and you are right to be. You also told us how much you enjoy your topics and all the extra clubs, especially those you have helped to plan them or the ones you have specifically asked for. The choice of clubs and all the exciting ways that your teachers find to make learning fun are quite exceptional. We were very impressed with all the work that you do in helping to make your school an even better place to learn.

We found that you go to a good school that is getting better and better all the time. You make outstanding progress in English, mathematics and science, so that you leave Year 6 with results that are above most other schools. You told us that you feel exceptionally safe in school, and we agree. All the staff take good care of you, and you always have someone to help you with any problems. You all get on very well together. Your attendance could be much better though, and too many of you come to school late. We have asked the staff to keep a closer eye on how often you are away or late, and act quickly when they spot that there are problems. You can help too. Always make sure you come to school whenever you can, and remind your parents about the time that you need to be there.

Your headteacher, and the others who help her run the school, are working very hard and successfully to make sure you get the most out of your time at school. They are very good at spotting anything that stops you from learning, and then doing something about it. Those of you who find learning more difficult get lots of extra help, but this sometimes carries on when you no longer need it, so we have asked the headteacher to make sure you only get the extra help you really need. Overall though, the future looks very bright for your school and I wish you every success in it, and in your future lives.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll

Lead inspector

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