

Minworth Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103345
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	286635
Inspection date	8 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	124
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Holland
Headteacher	Spencer Lambeth-Angell
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2002
School address	Water Orton Lane Minworth Sutton Coldfield B76 9BU
Telephone number	0121 3511345
Fax number	0121 3131275

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small primary school is situated right on the edge of Birmingham, with most pupils coming from the local community. The number of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. Children's attainment is below average on entry to school in the Reception Year. The school provides childcare provision for children before and after school. This has been inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with good features, especially in the way that members of staff support pupils' personal needs. As one pupil said, 'All teachers will help you and they are all lovely'. Working within the school's calm, happy and welcoming atmosphere, pupils develop good social skills and grow in confidence and self-esteem.

The good leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff have helped the school to improve quickly after a period of instability in staffing that led to a significant drop in standards in 2004. Senior managers actively sought support from the local authority and together they have put in place effective systems that have quickly improved provision. Consequently, teaching and learning are now satisfactory overall, with good elements across the school. Improved teaching means that pupils' achievement is also now satisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and they manage behaviour well. Skilled teaching assistants give good support in lessons. Teachers generally set challenging work for pupils, although there are occasions when it is not pitched at exactly the right level for less-able pupils, causing them to struggle.

Children in the Reception Year make satisfactory progress and standards are slightly below nationally expected levels by the end of the year. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. Standards have risen significantly in the last three years and are now only slightly below average by the end of Year 6. Test results in mathematics continue to be lower than those in English and science. Pupils make good progress in reading because of the many good opportunities that they get to read in school and to their parents at home. In mathematics, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to improve their investigative and problem-solving skills in numeracy or other lessons. This makes the curriculum only satisfactory, although there is good enrichment through clubs, visits and visitors. These contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school.

The headteacher and staff continue to work together well to improve provision. There is a good awareness of what remains to be done. In the last two years the school has collected a wealth of information about pupils' progress. Senior managers have rightly identified that this information now needs to be used even more sharply to check that all initiatives are having the desired effect, especially on the pace of learning of less-able pupils.

Most parents are very supportive of the school and they are rightly pleased with the good quality care, guidance and support given to pupils. One parent summed up their views saying 'It's like one big family where everyone knows everybody'. This results in pupils' personal development being good. Pupils take responsibility well and make a good contribution to the community. For example, the school has recently won an award for the way that pupils have developed links with local senior citizens. Pupils are eager and happy learners and the introduction of target setting means that they have a good understanding of how to improve their work. Their behaviour is good and they are at ease when talking to adults. As one pupil said, 'We are proud of our school'.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils enough opportunities to develop investigative and problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Ensure that teaching consistently meets the needs of less-able pupils.
- Check that recent initiatives are having the desired effect on the achievement of all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In the Reception Year, children make satisfactory progress and are working at just below the expected levels by the end of the year. Children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development, quickly becoming confident and self-sufficient.

Standards at the end of Year 6 have been improving over the last three years and are now only slightly below average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils do well in reading but, in mathematics, investigative and problem-solving skills are weak. The school has rightly begun to give these aspects of the curriculum a higher profile so that skills can develop more quickly. Pupils develop good speaking and listening skills as they move through the school because this aspect of the curriculum is promoted well.

Generally progress is at least, satisfactory throughout the school. However, there are occasions in lessons when the needs of less-able pupils are not met well enough, slowing learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make the best progress when they are being given extra help outside lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are polite and friendly. They form good relationships with each other and members of staff. They behave well at most times, although occasionally some pupils become inattentive when they are expected to sit and listen for too long. Pupils enjoy school, with one speaking for many by saying, 'I like this school because I have lots of friends'. Attendance rates are slightly below average. The school runs competitions to encourage better attendance, and this has helped to reduce absences over the last few years.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are confident and their knowledge of their targets supports learning well. Pupils know that if they fall out with their friends we 'should talk about it'. They show consideration for others and take responsibility well. The playtime buddies report that through their endeavours they have 'not had many problems recently'.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Children in the Reception Year know that hand washing is important to avoid getting 'a bad tummy'. Older pupils are keen to take part in active playtime games and sports clubs and they explain the benefits of eating healthily. Pupils develop generally sound basic skills that prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

All teachers form good relationships with the pupils and use resources such as interactive whiteboards well to capture the pupils' interest. Challenging questioning encourages more-able pupils to think and work hard. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for groups of pupils. As a result, pupils concentrate well and behaviour is managed effectively. In the Reception Year, members of staff work together well and provide sensitive support that is especially successful in supporting the children's personal development and speaking and listening.

Throughout the school, there are occasions when teachers do not provide suitable work for less-able pupils and those with learning difficulties, especially in mathematics and during whole-class discussions. When this happens, these pupils do not learn quickly enough. Teachers mark work frequently and show how pupils can improve. As one pupil said, 'Marking tells us where we have gone wrong'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum for Reception children is satisfactory, although at times it is restricted because children are being taught, for the first time, in a mixed-age class. There are good role-play activities to encourage personal development and speaking and listening, but sometimes children sit still for too long and have limited access to the outdoor area.

In Years 1 to 6, a varied and relevant curriculum interests pupils well. Senior managers make good use of assessment information to identify aspects of the curriculum that need to be promoted more effectively. For example, weaknesses in writing prompted a writing project and this has helped to improve progress. The school has correctly identified the need to extend the opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics to solve problems and carry out investigations.

The curriculum supports personal development well. A good range of additional activities such as French, visits and visitors extends the pupils' skills and enjoyment of school. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about their 'horrible history' visits which they said 'make learning fun'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good pastoral care ensures that pupils behave well and feel secure. The school works closely with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being. Members of staff understand the pupils' personal needs well. As a result, any concerns are followed up quickly. One pupil spoke for many by saying, 'People look after you well'. Sensitive support when children first start school helps them to settle quickly into routines.

Academic support and guidance has improved over the last two years and is now good. The school has revised its systems for assessing how well pupils are doing. This has helped to ensure that differing needs are being met more effectively, although more needs to be done to ensure that less-able pupils do better. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are given suitable support towards meeting their individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

This is a school that is improving quickly. Senior managers have taken decisive action to tackle underachievement and most pupils are now back on track. There have been many positive initiatives that have helped to raise standards and successfully demonstrate the school's good capacity for further improvement. Pupils' progress is being very thoroughly monitored and they are being set clear targets for improvement. There has been a successful focus on improving writing skills across the school.

Good systems for evaluating school effectiveness are now sharply focused on whether all pupils are doing well enough. Subject leaders in English and mathematics provide a good lead. Subject action plans identify clearly the right priorities. Senior managers know that they now need to concentrate on monitoring the success of recent developments and on ensuring that all pupils are achieving equally well, giving greater emphasis to the progress of less-able pupils.

The school makes good use of available resources. The school has a falling roll owing to changes in the local community, but has successfully maintained good staffing levels through the careful management of available funds.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive, but not all of them get sufficiently involved in monitoring the work of the school so that they can hold the school to account.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 May 2007

Dear Children

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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were very polite and friendly. At the moment, your school is providing a satisfactory education. This means that we found some good things in the school but also some things that need improving.

Here are some of the best things we found out about your school.

- You are making steady progress as you move through the school. At the moment, you make slightly slower progress in mathematics than in English and science.
- You enjoy school and take responsibility well. We were particularly impressed with the way that you were able to talk about your targets and explain what you needed to do to improve your work.
- Adults are very kind and caring and they look after you well. They give you good support in and out of lessons.
- You are taught all the subjects you should be. The school is good at teaching you about the importance of staying safe and healthy and there are lots of interesting visits and visitors. The 'Horrible History' visits sound great fun!
- Members of staff are leading the school well and are working hard to make sure that you learn even more quickly.
- Most of your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

To make it even better, what we have asked your school to do now is to:

- help you do better in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to carry out investigations and problem-solving activities
- make sure that teachers always pitch work at exactly the right level for all of you so that it is not too hard
- check that all the new things members of staff have introduced are helping you all to learn more quickly.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard. We wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely, Mr M Capper Lead Inspector