



Lodge Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103969
Local Authority Sandwell
Inspection number 286823
Inspection dates 27–28 February 2007
Reporting inspector Stephen Parker

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Oak Lane
School category	Community		West Bromwich
Age range of pupils	3–11		B70 8PN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 5532389
Number on roll (school)	300	Fax number	0121 5532389
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Vacant Position
		Headteacher	James Pearce
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 27–28 February 2007	Inspection number 286823
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school. It serves a culturally diverse and mobile population in an area of high social disadvantage. Most pupils come from minority ethnic groups and English is an additional language for more than three quarters of the intake. The number of pupils leaving or joining the school other than at the usual time is above average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is also above average. There have been a large number of staff changes in recent years. A new headteacher took up post in January 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school gives a satisfactory standard of education. It has strengths in its provision for art, music and drama. It has won a national award for its work in design and technology and a gold award in the Healthy Schools scheme. Pupils make good progress in their personal development. They behave well, and are keen to learn and to take on responsibilities. Relationships are good and the school is calm and orderly. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has made an impressive start in building a committed staff team that shares his determination to raise standards. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate.

Standards on entry to the Nursery are low and most children speak little or no English. Good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes makes sure that children get off to a good start. Those learning English as an additional language (EAL) make steady progress in English as they move through the school but many pupils with little or no English join later. These pupils are successfully integrated into the school but the fact that they are often at the early stages of learning English impacts on standards in other subjects. The school is at present without a leader for EAL and improvement in this area has not been as rapid as in others as a result, particularly in the use of assessment. However, an appointment is planned and provision is satisfactory overall.

The quality of care, support and guidance for all pupils is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A few pupils in each year reach high standards but the number with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. This means that the range of needs is very wide in each class and in a few lessons the work is not pitched at the right level to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory. The school recognises that pupils need more opportunities to practise skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) through other subjects.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Provision for the Foundation Stage is now good. Standards in English, mathematics and science are a little higher in Years 1 to 6 but remain exceptionally low. Following a sharp fall in test results last year, the school has benefited from intensive support from the local authority. The new management team has successfully built on this work with the result that pupils now make satisfactory progress. Key to this improvement is a robust assessment system and a rigorous programme of monitoring of teaching and pupils' work. As a result of these recent initiatives the school now has detailed information on its performance and the confidence to set more challenging targets for Year 6 this year.

Parents think highly of the school, which offers them a range of courses and other support programmes. Links with neighbouring schools, educational specialists and the community are used well. In view of the clear direction set by the headteacher and the determined support of staff and governors, the school is demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise attainment in English, mathematics and science by making better use of assessment information to guide teaching.
- Ensure that pupils have more opportunities to develop the skills learned in literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects.
- Improve the management of provision for English as an additional language and track pupils' progress in this area more closely through the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are well below the expected levels when children start school and a very high number have English as an additional language. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage but are still working at well-below-national expectations when they enter Year 1. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have been exceptionally low in English, mathematics and science since the previous inspection. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make satisfactory progress towards the targets set in their individual programmes.

Actions taken to arrest the decline in standards have been successful. Standards are slightly above those at the time of the previous inspection. However, almost half the pupils do not reach the expected levels by Year 6 and very few gain the higher levels. Writing is particularly weak, reflecting the large number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. This weakness affects learning in other subjects, although examples of good work are evident in art and design and technology. Informed by more accurate assessments, the school has raised its targets for Year 6 and the target for mathematics is particularly challenging. However, the school recognises that there is a long way to go to close the gap on national expectations and make up for weak progress in the past.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Their lively paintings and beautiful collages are an inspiring reflection of different cultures and religions. Pupils want to speak to visitors and are proud of their school. Their strong relationships with adults and each other help to produce an inclusive school where respect for others is a distinctive feature. There is no problem with bullying. Pupils are keen to help around school, taking on significant responsibilities, for example, as school council members and playground buddies. They respond well to the school's aim of developing healthy minds in healthy bodies. They say they enjoy school and their parents agree.

Behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Children in the Foundation Stage settle well and enjoy the interesting range of activities. Most pupils concentrate hard and work well with others or independently. Attendance is below average, although the

school is doing all it can to work with parents to improve it. Weak basic skills, particularly in literacy, are a handicap for the future well-being of many pupils but it is an impressive feature that Year 6 pupils want to help themselves, volunteering for extra homework and lessons before or after school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage. Children in Nursery and Reception classes are happy to join in with all activities. They make good progress because the teacher works constantly to involve them and develop their language skills. Monitoring records show that there is an increasing amount of good teaching across the school. Lessons are consistently planned with clear 'steps to success' that are shared with pupils so they know what is expected. They are given strong encouragement that helps build their confidence when speaking in class discussions. Teaching assistants play a good part in helping groups, especially those with learning difficulties and disabilities. They also play a full part in helping pupils who are learning English as an additional language to be fully integrated into lessons. Interactive whiteboards are used well as a teaching aid and end-of-lesson reviews generally reinforce learning effectively. However, tasks do not always match the needs of all pupils when account is taken of the very wide range of ability in all classes. Expectations are not always high enough for the performance of some pupils, including the more able and those whose first language is English. Marking is satisfactory but some of its impact is lost because teachers do not consistently set follow-up tasks or targets for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage effectively meets children's needs. There is a wide range of interesting activities for children to get involved in, including guided outdoor play. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory but the school recognises that opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through other subjects are too limited. Drama is used well to develop pupils' confidence in speaking and this is particularly beneficial for those pupils learning English as an additional language. The curriculum is extended well through many visits, visitors and after-class activities, including a residential visit for Year 5. There is a stimulating range of clubs for sports and the arts with some impressive results such as the attractive displays by the art club, school drama productions and music performances in a local concert hall.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff know their pupils well and classrooms are calm and productive. Relationships are good and pupils say that they feel safe. All pupils are fully involved in the life of the school. Child protection procedures are satisfactory but staff training needs updating.

Academic assessment is satisfactory. The school now has robust systems for tracking pupils' progress. Staff are generally successful in using this information to identify pupils' needs and guide lesson planning. The targets set for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are clearly focused. Staff are beginning to set targets for all pupils in literacy and numeracy and this is proving effective in guiding pupils' learning. The progress of those pupils who are at the early stages of learning English is not tracked as carefully as it needs to be. This is a consequence of the disruption to the way this aspect of school has been managed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

In the short time since his arrival the headteacher has developed a clear vision for improving the school and gained the support and confidence of staff. His analysis of school strengths and areas needing improvement is accurate. The senior management team is strong, although the present lack of a leader to manage the provision for supporting pupils at the early stage of learning English is slowing development in this significant aspect of the school's work. Leaders of other key areas are well informed and committed to improvement. Several teachers are new to the school but they have benefited from well- focused support led by senior staff. Teaching is improving as a result of a rigorous programme of monitoring of teaching and learning coupled with the willingness of staff to take on new ideas. Robust procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are giving a clear picture of where whole-school improvements are needed. This range of initiatives is recent and so has not had the full intended impact, but the early signs are positive. Weaknesses are being tackled with determination. The school is able to show that pupils are now making satisfactory progress and standards are rising. This has given management the confidence to set more challenging targets for Year 6. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have begun to hold the school to account and are seeking training to help them in their work. The school gives satisfactory value for money and has well-founded plans to spend its large budget surplus on improving resources for teaching.

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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?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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	4
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?	3

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	3
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

As you know, we visited your school recently to find out how well you are doing. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons, at lunch and in the playground. We were very impressed with the beautiful displays of your work when the Chair and Secretary of the School Council showed us round the school. Thank you for being so friendly, polite and helpful to us.

Here are some of the things that we liked about your school.

- You work hard and enjoy lessons as well as the many clubs and other activities.
- You know a lot about how to keep healthy.
- You take on responsibilities and can be relied on to work on your own.

We know that your headteacher and other adults want the school to be even better so we have asked them to make these improvements.

- To make sure that they give you work that is not too hard or too easy in English, science and mathematics.
- To plan ways for you to practise your literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other lessons.
- To make sure that the school keeps close checks on how well those pupils who are learning to speak English are doing.

We think that you could help yourselves by.

- Trying hard to reach your targets for reading, writing and mathematics when you do work in other subjects.

Thank you again for your help. We send you our best wishes for the future.