

# Northfield Manor Primary School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	103304
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336051
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Bob Drew

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

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Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	263
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Sue Hynds
Headteacher	Matt Smith
Date of previous school inspection	18 – 19 June 2007
School address	Swarthmore Road Selly Oak Birmingham B29 4JT
Telephone number	0121 6752489
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Age group	4 - 11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who visited 23 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at its development plan, self-evaluation form, monitoring records and key policy documents. Thirty-nine parental questionnaires were scrutinised.

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

- current attainment and progress towards targets in Key Stage 2
- how well teaching and learning are monitored and whether improvements in lesson quality have taken place under the current leadership team
- whether the outcomes and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory or good.

## Information about the school

The school is a little above average and serves a neighbourhood of mixed housing in the Birmingham suburb of Selly Oak. The great majority of pupils are White British, with small numbers coming from a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. Many more pupils than average are entitled to free school meals. The proportion joining or leaving school part way through a key stage is high. The current headteacher has been in post for just over a year and other key staff assumed their roles two weeks before the inspection. Awards include the Active Mark and Healthy Schools Award.

## Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3
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The school's capacity for sustained improvement

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## Main findings

This school offers a satisfactory and improving quality of education. Parents are positive about the school and increasingly choose to send their children there. Capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. The headteacher has been in post for only a year, but has already led a marked improvement in behaviour and a rise in the quality of teaching. The school enables pupils to reach broadly average standards and make satisfactory progress, and it has established measures that are beginning to improve both.

Pupils enter school with much lower than expected skills in most areas, especially literacy. Effective leadership and consistently good teaching and care in the Early Years Foundation Stage help children to make good progress. They settle quickly and enjoy lessons. By the time they enter Key Stage 1, they have made up considerable ground, though still fall short of national expectations. Progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 1 is good, so that pupils match and sometimes exceed national average scores at the end of Year 2. Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Progress overall in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers. Attainment and progress in Years 5 and 6 are better than in previous years and the school is beginning to set increasingly demanding targets to promote above-average standards. While the use of data to monitor progress has developed recently, it is not yet rigorous enough.

Behaviour is good and a high proportion of pupils and parents say that the school is both enjoyable and safe, as reflected in the enthusiasm and positive attitudes of pupils. Parental comments and school records show that this was not previously the case. Pupils adopt a good approach to healthy living and make a satisfactory contribution to their school and wider community. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Scope for reflection and awareness of other cultures is adequate and moral and social development is good.

Teaching is satisfactory, with much that is good. Very occasionally, teaching is either outstanding or inadequate. Good lessons are increasingly common, stemming from positive relationships, strong pace and lively, engaging activities that fire pupils' enthusiasm and interest. In satisfactory lessons, pace and the involvement of pupils is less well managed. Even in otherwise good teaching, work does not consistently match the range of pupils' needs, and assessment information is underused.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with some imaginative cross curricular projects in use and others awaiting completion. Extra curricular provision is good. Care, guidance

and support are good and provide the basis for pupils' strong sense of safety and of being well supported. All statutory requirements are fully met and the school is alert to safeguarding issues.

Leadership and management have undergone considerable change and the headteacher is driving improvement effectively. Senior leaders are taking decisive action and their presence is visible around school. This has given staff confidence and raised expectations. It is too early to see the full impact of these features, but the headteacher's communication of ambition for the school has been very successful, leading to strong morale amongst colleagues and pupils. Improvements have already taken place in several key areas and the basis for further progress has been established. The governing body and middle managers are not yet as effective as senior leaders but the school is aware that their roles need to be developed.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the accuracy and use of assessment, so that reliable data, understood by all staff, is frequently used to monitor progress and guide day-to-day teaching.
- Increase the proportion of high-quality teaching so that by the end of 2010 over 80% of lessons are good or better and over 10% are outstanding. Do this by making differentiation, pace and the use of learning objectives and levels far more effective.
- Set increasingly challenging targets for standards so that by the end of 2011, attainment in English and mathematics significantly exceeds national averages.

About 40% of the school's whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory but secure academic gains and show a strong sense of enjoyment of school. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average. Recent test results for Year 6 were below, but relatively close to, national averages in English, mathematics and science. Targets for the current Year 6 indicate a rise in expectations for summer 2010 and pupils' work confirms they are reaching higher standards than previous cohorts. They are on track to produce rates of progress that would marginally exceed those expected nationally. Progress in lessons is frequently good, reflecting improvements in teaching and pupils' attitudes. In Year 5, current outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning show marked improvement, confirming that positive trends in achievement are sustainable. This is further supported by the good progress being made by pupils in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and improved teaching quality in Years 3 and 4. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit significantly when they receive support in lessons or small groups, but resources for this are limited. Overall their progress is satisfactory. The relative progress of girls and boys varies from year to year but with no consistent pattern. Pupils from minority ethnic groups

make broadly the same progress as their peers.

Pupils know how to stay safe and generally feel free from bullying. Where incidents occur, they say that these are dealt with effectively. They offer each other good support, for instance, through the ‘buddy system’. Behaviour is good, and there has been a marked improvement in pupils’ attitudes and conduct. They are attentive in the overwhelming majority of lessons and are informal but respectful with staff and visitors. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and have satisfactory workplace skills. Many pupils participate in fundraising activities that develop their financial awareness further, including a ‘Make and bake’ cake sale and helping with the Christmas Fayre. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and the wider community, as members of the active school council and by taking on individual responsibilities, such as that of information and communication technology (ICT) monitors. They work hard at whole-school projects and fundraising. There are links with the local community and businesses, but pupils have limited national and international awareness.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

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

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory. It includes a little that is outstanding, resulting in excellent progress, and a little that is inadequate, where progress is unsatisfactory. However, satisfactory and good lessons predominate. Teaching has improved over the past year and the school is aiming at a higher proportion of lessons that are good or better to ensure good long-term progress. Strengths in teaching include good relationships and high expectations of behaviour. Pupils show good attitudes to learning. There is consistently good support from classroom assistants and good use of modern technology, especially interactive white boards. Practical resources in

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

areas such as mathematics and role-play in subjects such as history have a good impact on pupils' understanding. The best learning occurs when pupils are asked open-ended questions, as in mathematics, where they are asked to explain strategies they have used. Marking is up-to-date and the best examples comment on how to improve. More often, though, assessment and tracking data are not used sufficiently to ensure that work effectively matches the needs of all. This leaves some pupils only partially challenged and others needing better support.

Pupils enjoy a broad range of activities and the curriculum allows them to make satisfactory progress. It includes good provision to increase awareness of health and safety issues. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including art and craft, trampoline and martial arts. The school is working with some success to develop a more creative cross-curricular approach to learning. However, this is not a consistent feature of curriculum planning. Pupils gain sound levels of knowledge and understanding across the curriculum, but work needs to be better targeted to different ability groups. A wide range of other agencies is used to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Care, guidance and support are good. The school provides a safe and secure environment with good procedures to support vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties or behavioural problems. Very effective care and guidance for children in the Early Years Foundation Stages helps them settle very quickly into school routines. Pupils say they feel well cared for at school and inspectors find that the positive, encouraging attitudes of staff confirms this.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
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?

Leadership and management lead to satisfactory outcomes, but senior leaders demonstrate a growing ability to improve provision. High staff morale and positive attitudes from pupils show that the headteacher's ambitions for the school are being successfully communicated. Expectations of teachers and the quality of much of their work have risen because of rigorous monitoring and supportive action. A new discipline policy, high-profile staff presence around school and swift, consistent action to deal with poor behaviour have transformed the climate for learning.

The promotion of equal opportunities and safeguarding measures is well managed. The school is alert to the growing range of abilities, languages and physical needs presented by pupils and it offers the breadth of learning opportunities and support systems required to meet these needs effectively. Safeguarding records comply fully with requirements. They are very clear and the school gives regular updates and

training for child protection. All necessary risk assessments are carried out. Engagement with parents, partnership with several secondary schools and community cohesion are currently satisfactory: all are features which, from a low base, have shown marked recent gains. There is a clear commitment to raise pupils' awareness of the variety of religious, ethnic and economic groups, both locally and further afield, but there has not yet been time to implement these plans.

The governing body has recently become far better informed and more able to influence provision. A collaborative working relationship has been established between governors and senior leaders and governors have a satisfactory but growing knowledge of the school's strength and weaknesses. Middle managers are all newly in post and have a clear view of their roles but have not yet begun to influence improvement. Value for money is satisfactory.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Attainment on entry is typically below age-related expectations, particularly in communication skills. Children enter with wide variety of pre-school experiences. Teaching and progress are consistently good but despite this, about a third do not attain the levels expected for children entering Year 1, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Teamwork is good, with very effective support from classroom assistants. This reflects the good leadership in Early Years Foundation Stage, which is collaborative and sets high expectations. Children are well behaved, happy learners who enjoy their education. The lead teacher makes visits to most local nurseries prior to children entering school, gaining a valuable insight into their needs. Given children's low attainment in communication on entry, the focus on linking letters and sounds and speaking and listening activities meets their needs well. There is a successful balance between child-initiated and teacher-focus group work, and good joint planning and sharing of expertise between the two classes. Good relationships engender confidence in the children. Their progress in personal, social and emotional

development and physical and creative development is particularly good. Good relationships with parents, through an open-door approach, are establishing strong parental links.

There is some free-flow activity from indoor to outdoor accommodation, but this is limited. There is satisfactory and sometimes good use of assessment. However, while other aspects of teaching, such as lively pace, active involvement of pupils and skillful questioning are consistent features, assessment information is sometimes underused, for instance, when matching pupils to activities.

*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 and carers are supportive of the school. Almost all believe that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. The great majority believe that teaching is good and that the school is effective in helping parents support their children's learning. On both of these issues, however, a significant minority disagree. A smaller minority believe that information to parents and the progress pupils make could both improve. Overall, it is clear that parents and carers in the area see the school as a good place to send their children since numbers joining the EYFS have recently doubled.



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

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Northfield Manor 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 39 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 375 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	51	18	46	0	0	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	22	56	16	41	0	0	1	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	7	18	26	67	2	5	4	10
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	23	23	59	3	8	3	8
The teaching is good at this school	10	26	18	46	4	10	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	26	18	46	4	10	3	8
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	36	20	51	2	5	3	8
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)	7	18	22	56	2	5	4	10
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	31	17	44	3	8	4	10
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	23	22	56	3	8	3	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	23	19	49	3	8	3	8
The school is led and managed effectively	12	31	21	54	2	5	2	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	49	12	31	2	5	5	13

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 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

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.



23 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northfield Manor Primary School, Selly Oak, B29 4JT

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave my team of inspectors when we came to your school last week. We enjoyed our visit because it seemed to us to be a lively, happy, school. It is currently giving you a satisfactory education and has recently made a lot of improvements. In your questionnaires, virtually all of you say you like school.

We were most pleased with:

- the good progress children make in the Reception classes
- your good behaviour
- the way your headteacher leads the school
- the fact that you say you feel safe and know how to live healthily
- the good quality of care and support the school gives you
- the good teaching in a lot of lessons
- recent improvements in teaching and in your attitudes to learning in Year 6.

If the school is to improve further it needs to:

- make sure all the marks and assessment grades teachers give you are accurate, and you and your teachers must use them more often to help you to reach your targets
- increase the number of high quality lessons by the end of the year, so that over 80% have the lively pace, challenging work for all abilities and exciting activities that the best ones already have
- help raise English and mathematics standards by setting targets for the end of 2011 which are higher than the averages for England in those subjects.

Best wishes for the rest of your time at Northfield Manor.

Yours faithfully

Bob Drew  
Lead Inspector

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