



Parkfield Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104329
LEA Wolverhampton
Inspection number 277132
Inspection dates 31 January 2006 to 1 February 2006
Reporting inspector Tony Dobell AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Dimmock Street
School category	Community		Wolverhampton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		West Midlands WV4 6HB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 558627
Number on roll	189	Fax number	01902 558628
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev Eddy Brooks
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Ian Miles

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	31 January 2006 - 1 February 2006	277132

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized school serves an inner-city area just south east of the centre of Wolverhampton. Most pupils come from the immediate area, which experiences significant social and economic deprivation. Children start school with knowledge and skills which are well below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language are above average, as is the proportion entitled to free school meals. The numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school during the year are above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Parkfield is a satisfactory but improving school that gives satisfactory value for money. It judges much of its own effectiveness in line with inspection findings. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall but better for those who have learning difficulties and those at an early stage of learning English. Provision for children in the reception class is good and they make good progress. However, standards are below expectations when they join Year 1 because they start from such a low base. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although there are examples of good teaching. The curriculum is satisfactory and the school has plans in place to improve it. Pupils benefit from good levels of care and their personal development is good. Pupils and their parents are rightly proud of their school and appreciate the school's sensitive support for the community.

Leadership is satisfactory but, with the support of staff and governors, the headteacher is driving improvement forward. Priorities to raise standards, make better checks on the outcomes of initiatives and, in particular, to make pupils better at speaking and listening are high on the agenda for improvement. Although the school is working hard to improve it, attendance is below average. The school has improved well since its previous inspection and has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on pupils' basic skills, particularly speaking and listening, to make sure they all progress as well as they can and reach higher standards.
- Improve the way the school is led and managed with the help of subject leaders and governors so they can do more checks on what is working well and what improvements they still need to make.
- Work more closely with parents to improve attendance further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Although standards are low, pupils achieve satisfactorily and make satisfactory progress from a very low starting point. Children enter the Reception Year with weaker skills than those normally found for children of this age, particularly in language. Sensitive support and skilled teaching help them to gain in confidence and make good progress, although their standards are below expectations when they enter Year 1. Although most pupils make satisfactory progress, standards remain well below average in the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6. The reasons for this include high numbers of pupils with learning difficulties, many pupils joining the school during the course of the year, often with limited knowledge of English, and higher than average absence rates. These factors have an adverse effect on standards in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because they are given effective support.

Some pupils can be careless in their writing, although they often know what is wrong when questioned. In mathematics, some pupils have difficulties with basic skills such as insecure recall of tables, and this results in errors. Pupils' difficulties in expressing themselves clearly and precisely make it difficult for them to do well in other subjects, such as science. The recently appointed headteacher knows that the pupils' speaking and writing skills need extending if standards are to improve. He has introduced good systems to track and assess pupils' progress but they have not been in place long enough to have a significant effect on standards. However, pupils are now able to discuss their targets for improvement with good understanding. As a result, their rate of progress is improving.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with a particular strength in celebrating different cultures both within and outside the school. For example, pupils and parents speak enthusiastically about a recent Kwanza-African festival. Pupils feel secure and valued in the school and they have good attitudes to learning. The school enriches its pupils' lives well, and the rapidly developing links with parents are reinforcing this so that pupils are becoming more confident. Pupils' behaviour is good and they enjoy their learning. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe. Although they know the value of leading healthy lifestyles, they are less clear about how to do this. They have good community links, including links with local businesses which are helping them to prepare for their future working lives. The school council has a high profile and pupils are developing a good and early understanding of democracy.

Most pupils attend well but extended holidays during termtime and a few pupils with very poor attendance records mean that attendance is below average overall. The school has introduced strategies to improve attendance and these are achieving some success. The headteacher appreciates that preparation for a successful future means that pupils and their parents must understand the value of regular attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features. For example, in reception, the teacher skilfully captures children's attention so that they settle quickly and work enthusiastically. Their very good behaviour helps them to make good progress. Good examples in Years 2 and 6 show that teachers explain very clearly what they want pupils to do and encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning by evaluating whether or not they have achieved what was expected from the lesson. When teaching is only satisfactory, the pace of learning is slower and, consequently, so is the pupils' progress. Opportunities are missed to improve pupils' speaking and

listening. Throughout the school, the teachers encourage good relationships and co-operative behaviour to help pupils complete tasks and make progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and, because they are well supported by teaching assistants, they achieve success.

Recently introduced systems for assessing pupils' standards and tracking their progress are providing a more effective basis for teaching and learning. Work set is now more securely rooted in what pupils already know, understand and can do. This means that planning for learning over time is more effective and pupils have a better understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets pupils' needs. The school is developing links between subjects, for example, between English and information and communication technology (ICT), and these are helping pupils to appreciate the relevance of what they are learning. The provision for ICT has improved well since the last inspection and the school understands that there is scope for further development. Although curriculum planning is satisfactory, there is scope for improvement such as making sure that pupils extend their speaking and listening skills in all subjects.

The curriculum is enriched well by a programme of visits and visitors and by special events celebrating different festivals and cultures. A wide range of clubs and activities is well attended and much appreciated by pupils and parents. Activities are modified or extended to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and those at an early stage of learning English, resulting in better progress. Good personal, health and social education helps pupils to gain in confidence and enjoy their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. This is a caring school, which values all pupils for what they can do. Staff know the pupils well and they, in turn, are confident to bring any concerns to adults, knowing that they will be listened to and supported. Pupils with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress because their learning targets are reviewed regularly. Procedures for tracking pupils' progress and helping them to make further progress are now good but have not been in place long enough to have a significant effect on standards. Pupils are safe and secure in the school and there are good procedures for child protection. Pupils at risk for any reason are identified quickly and supported well, using good links with outside agencies where this is helpful. All newly arrived pupils are helped to settle and careful support is given to those at an early stage of learning English. Pupils care well for each other. In discussion with inspectors, one boy said, 'we welcome everybody who's new'.

The school is developing good links with parents and the community, not least through its 'parent partnership'. The parents appreciate this and are becoming increasingly involved in their children's education. One parent said 'there is no community outside; the school is the centre and acts as the focus; it brings us together'. Support for families is an integral part of the school's care for its pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and improving. The headteacher has a clear vision for improving and developing the school. His careful analysis has helped him know what needs to be improved.

The headteacher's vision for the school is rooted in raising standards. The systems put into place for assessing pupils' standards and tracking their progress are a major step forward. It will take time for them to have a full effect on standards, but a good start has been made. The headteacher appreciates that, if pupils are to succeed, their confidence and self-esteem must be raised, and the community needs to value education and learning. The headteacher, with the support of all adults and governors, is developing this, and is providing good leadership.

Senior managers in the school have a good understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. Subject leaders are improving their management of pupils' learning in their subjects. This is now satisfactory but is within reach of becoming good as systems become increasingly embedded. The Foundation Stage and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language are managed well.

Governors are highly committed to the school and enthusiastic for its pupils to succeed. However, many are new to their roles and appreciate that they need to develop their skills in evaluating the school's work and planning further improvements. Strategic planning, led by the headteacher and the senior leadership team, incorporates wide consultation and accurately identifies what the school needs to do to raise standards and improve further.

Under the headteacher's energetic leadership, the school has improved well over the last year. It now has the capacity to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school, being so polite and friendly, and talking to us about your work and lives in the school.

We think that your school does a number of things well:

- You are well cared for by all the adults and you feel confident and happy.
- You develop well as individuals and you enjoy your learning.
- You are all treated equally and valued for what you can do.
- Relationships are good; you behave well and support each other well.
- Your headteacher, helped by all the staff and the governors, has plans to make the school even better.

These are the things we have suggested they do to improve things even more:

- Build on the basic skills you learn when you start school, particularly, listening, and talking, to make sure you all progress as well as you can by the time you leave school.
- Improve the way the school is led and managed with the help of staff and governors so they can do more checks on what is working well and what improvements they still need to make.
- Some parents need more help in making sure that all pupils come to school every day.

We enjoyed our two days in your school very much and wish you well for the future.

Best wishes

Mr A J Dobell Lead Inspector