

Allesley Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103656
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	355421
Inspection dates	22–23 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Marion Thompson

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 of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Shaw
Headteacher	Rhona Forde
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2007
School address	Winsford Avenue Coventry CV5 9NG
Telephone number	02476 674586
Fax number	02476 672450
Email address	admin@allesleyhall.coventry.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors saw 17 lessons and parts of lessons and observed 8 teachers at least once each. Informal discussions were held with a sample of parents who accompanied their children to school. Meetings took place with the Chair of Governors, staff and groups of pupils. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, which included the school development plan, assessment information, safeguarding documentation, curricular planning, samples of pupils' work and an audit undertaken by the school. Inspectors analysed the results of the 55 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and took account of the views expressed in staff and pupil questionnaires.

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

- The progress of the higher attaining pupils, especially boys.
- The impact of teaching and the curriculum on pupils' progress in writing.
- The effectiveness with which the governing body challenges the school.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school, where the vast majority of children are of White British origin. Around 14% of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest of which is of Asian or Asian- British Indian heritage. No pupils are identified as being at the early stages of learning to speak English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average and there are no pupils with a statement. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also well below average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and Activemark. The current headteacher was appointed in April 2008 and the deputy headteacher and a member of the senior team were appointed in September 2008. Two more senior leaders have been appointed in the last year. A family learning room and library were built between April and July 2010.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Allesley Hall provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school has emerged from a period of staffing disruption, which led to a decline in attainment and progress over recent years. National test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2010 demonstrate that the school has begun to reverse this trend, especially at higher levels for girls and in writing. Attainment is average, representing satisfactory progress and achievement for pupils of all ethnic groups from their starting points on entry to the school. Those who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress because of sound support. Good care, support and guidance help pupils to deal successfully with barriers to learning. Pupils develop into well behaved, thoughtful and polite young people who enjoy learning.

Improvements have been steadfastly led by the headteacher, with sound support from governors and staff and strong endorsement from parents. Satisfactory self-evaluation and carefully prioritised planning have led to the development of an interesting creative curriculum that motivates pupils to learn. Raising the profile with the school community has improved attendance, which is now high. Careful coaching and development of staff have ensured that the quality of teaching and assessment are satisfactory and continue to improve. The strategies that the school has introduced, such as new forms of assessment in writing and more focussed interventions when pupils fall behind, have contributed to better progress. Staff have more accountability for the progress of pupils in their care and good guidance has been provided to parents to help them support their children's learning more effectively. These steps forward demonstrate that the school has satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

There is, however, further to go. Progress is uneven across classes and subjects. It is most rapid in Year 6 where the quality of teaching is consistently good, and in reading where attainment is above average. Occasionally the more-able pupils, particularly boys, do not make as much progress as they should because a small minority of lessons lack pace and challenge. Parents and pupils are aware of targets for learning, but pupils are not consistently encouraged to use them while they are working. While satisfactory overall, from time to time marking does not provide clear guidance to pupils on how to improve the standard of their work. The development of skills in writing is slower than in other areas. This is because occasionally teachers do not have or convey to pupils a clear knowledge of different literary features and do not consistently use assessment to plan lessons which build effectively on their prior learning.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2011 accelerate progress, particularly of the more-able pupils, especially boys, by ensuring teachers consistently:
 - provide pupils with a good level of challenge and conduct lessons at a brisk pace
 - encourage pupils to use their targets to improve their work
 - provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve when marking work

- By July 2011 accelerate pupils' progress in writing, by ensuring that:
 - teachers' knowledge of different literary features is enhanced where necessary, to improve their teaching
 - assessment is used effectively to plan lessons which build progressively on pupils' prior learning.

About 40% of the schools 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

3

Pupils read fluently and express themselves clearly and confidently in discussion. Writing, while improving, is weaker, especially that of the boys. Handwriting and spelling in some classes are not as good as they should be. A few older pupils have difficulty in forming complex sentences and in recognizing the features of different sorts of writing, for example mixing up story telling and description. Pupils' progress in mathematics is satisfactory, but more rapid in some classes than others, especially in relation to mental mathematics. Pupils' have a good knowledge and understanding of science, but older pupils' skills in scientific investigation are less well developed. The school is tackling this effectively through the new curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs, most of whom have either learning or emotional and behavioural difficulties, make satisfactory progress when in class, because they are effectively supported by adults. Their progress is more rapid in intervention groups where learning is tailored closely to their needs. Occasionally more-able pupils, especially boys, do not make as much progress as they should because work is insufficiently demanding.

Pupils enjoy their work, especially when it is demanding, they concentrate well and make valuable contributions to discussions. They lead activities confidently, for example when Year 2 pupils took turns to lead a whole-class singing activity with great gusto. They collaborate well. Pupils feel safe and valued and are not distracted from their work by very occasional instances of unacceptable behaviour. They respond to challenging work with enthusiasm and work in a mature and sensible manner.

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Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and have well developed social skills, treating others with respect. They have a satisfactory awareness of different faiths, but their understanding and experience of the range of cultures within Britain and beyond is more limited. Pupils carry out their responsibilities within the school and wider community well, and helped to choose play equipment for the local park. They are knowledgeable about health issues, choosing healthy school meals and taking up sporting activities with enthusiasm. Despite high attendance and good social skills, pupils’ preparation for the future is satisfactory overall because their literacy and numeracy skills are broadly average.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	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	2
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	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Strong relationships with adults ensure that pupils enjoy their learning. The purpose of lessons is made clear so pupils understand what they are trying to achieve. Partner work is used productively to extend pupils’ understanding. However, a small minority of lessons lack pace and assessment information is not always used to make sure that tasks are adequately challenging, especially for the most able pupils. For example, during the inspection a small group of more-able pupils observed a lengthy demonstration of a mathematical task which they had already shown they could do. Occasionally teachers are not clear about exactly how to accelerate pupils’ progress in writing. Marking is regular and positive but does not routinely provide enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Pupils know they have targets but are not consistently reminded to use them to help them produce their best work.

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

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The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enhanced by partnerships with other schools, for example through clubs and activities in sport, music and dance. Interventions are increasingly meeting the specific needs of pupils well, for example through challenging work for a group of more-able boys in mathematics. A strong personal, social and health element permeates the curriculum, ensuring that pupils develop self-esteem and a good awareness of how to stay healthy. Pupils enjoy the recently introduced thematic curriculum because it is enriched by visits and linked to their local community. The school is beginning to motivate pupils, especially boys, to enjoy writing more, but there is further to go.

Well organised induction and transition arrangements help pupils to settle quickly when they start school or change classes. Parents speak highly of the personalised support provided for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, which helps them to develop self-esteem. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and good during specific interventions. A strong parent/school partnership has been developed in which parents are helped to support their child’s learning. Links with other agencies to support pupils’ health, safety and well-being are good. Strategies for promoting attendance are good and have resulted in improved levels.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction for the school and has gained the strong support of parents and staff. A sound system for monitoring pupils’ progress is in place. Improvement planning is based on a satisfactory, if over-generous analysis of the work of the school. This resulted in improvements such as higher attainment and better progress, especially for pupils in Year 6 last year, and improved attendance. Subject leadership is beginning to improve progress in core subjects. There have been recent improvements in teaching, assessment and the curriculum.

The governing body provides good support to the school. Its role in monitoring and providing challenge are not as well developed. Duties in relation to safeguarding are performed well and arrangements for child protection and staff recruitment are rigorous and regularly reviewed. The school’s engagement with parents, carers and other partners is good, and includes workshops to help parents to support their children’s learning better and ‘Fun for Fathers’ events, where fathers do joint

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activities with their children. These links enhance pupils’ academic progress and personal development.

The school tackles discrimination well on the few occasions when it occurs. However, the school recognises that there is more to do to eradicate the uneven progress made by some groups across the school.

Shared values are explicitly promoted and good provision is made to discover and respond to the needs of the school and local community. For example, classes held for grandparents were extended at their request to include information communication technology. The school has audited its contribution to community cohesion and has rightly established that pupils’ understanding and experience of national and international issues is at the early stage of development. Sensible plans are in place to address this.

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	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	3
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

Children’s skills on entry to the Reception class vary from year to year but overall their levels are within the range expected for their age. Children make satisfactory progress and enter Year 1 with broadly average attainment. Home visits by staff and arrangements that are sensitive to their needs help children to settle quickly and happily. Children learn supportive routines and take responsibility for clearing up. The programme of activities generally matches children’s needs and is increasingly designed to reflect their interests. For example, a role play area of a doctor’s surgery was based on children’s suggestions. However the more-able children, especially boys, do not always make quite as much progress as they should. This is because occasionally opportunities are missed to develop children’s thinking through skilful

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questioning. Writing development is not quite as strong as other areas. Assessment of children’s progress is not always accurate, but this is improving. There is a sensible balance between activities chosen by children and those directed by adults. Children are encouraged to take the initiative in learning activities and to make decisions. They learn to listen attentively and are thoughtful towards each other. The outdoor area is well resourced but opportunities for writing do not attract enough attention. Leadership and management are satisfactory because sensible planning is leading to improvement, such as a curriculum that more closely reflects children’s interests.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents’ and carers’ responses to the questionnaire are overwhelmingly positive, especially in relation to feeling that their children enjoy school, are kept safe, and that the school helps children to have a healthy lifestyle. The inspection team strongly endorses these views. However the team found that teaching is satisfactory rather than good, but is improving. A few parents/carers feel that their children are not making enough progress and the inspection team found that occasionally progress for some children is not as rapid as it should be, especially in writing. A small number of parents feel that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. The inspection team explored this and concludes that the school tries hard to respond not only to the views of parents/carers, but also to those of grandparents and children.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Allesley Hall 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 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 187 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	55	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	67	17	31	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	42	28	51	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	42	23	42	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	45	28	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	45	28	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	53	25	45	0	0	0	0
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)	23	42	26	47	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	38	31	56	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	38	28	51	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	25	33	60	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	55	22	40	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	55	23	42	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 is 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 term 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.



24 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Allesley Hall Primary School, Coventry, CV5 9NG

Thank you for the polite welcome you gave us when we visited your school. Your views and those of your parents or carers helped us to decide what we thought of the school and we appreciated them very much. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education and you make satisfactory progress. You get off to a sound start in the Reception class and settle quickly because staff take good care of you. Across the school we were impressed with:

- the improved progress you are making, especially in writing and your good standards in reading
- your good behaviour, enjoyment of learning and high attendance. Keep it up!
- your understanding of how to be healthy and the sensible choices you make about what you eat and how often you exercise
- how well you know how to keep safe and the way you take on responsibilities in the school and the community
- the good care the school provides for you especially when you are worried
- the improvements in teaching and assessment of your work
- the interesting activities the school provides for you, especially the themes you study
- the clear leadership of your headteacher and the help of staff who are working hard to make sure things continue to improve.

We want the school to make certain that work is pitched at the right level for you and makes you think hard, especially if you are a quick learner, by planning activities that provide you with a challenge. This is especially the case for boys, particularly when you are writing. We would also like lessons to be brisk, so you can make rapid progress. We have asked teachers to remind you to use your targets to help you to improve your work and to give you clear advice on how to improve your work when they mark it.

Yours sincerely

Marion Thompson
Lead inspector

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