

# Perry Common Junior and Infant School (NC)

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103213
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	308252
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Weston HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	197
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anthony Long
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 November 2004
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Hastings Road Perry Common Birmingham B23 5AJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01214 643863

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 December 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	308252

**Fax number**

01214 645753

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school serving an area of high economic hardship in north-east Birmingham. A higher than average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Almost a quarter are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with around one in 10 in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. Significantly more pupils join or leave the school at times other than the usual starting or leaving points. The school is part of the Kingstanding Education Action Zone. The school site is used by the Brambles Children's Centre, which is managed by the governing body, and the Story Wood Nursery, which is run independently. A breakfast club operates each morning and provides meals for up to 80 pupils. Most children enter the Nursery with skills and experiences that are well below the expected levels.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Perry Common Junior and Infant is a satisfactory school that is rapidly improving. Some issues identified at the time of the last inspection have not been fully addressed because the school is emerging from a period of transition and some turbulence. Governors have recently appointed several new teaching staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The new leadership team, coupled with the staff and governors, have made significant changes for the better. They have identified correctly and begun to address the key areas that will help this school make the necessary improvements. As one parent reported, 'There has been a marked improvement in the education and general atmosphere of the school.' The school has a number of strengths. The pastoral care provided by the school staff is outstanding. All staff care passionately about the pupils and pay robust attention to their safety and well-being. Pupils say they feel safe and know they can turn to any adult if they have a problem. This ensures pupils' personal development is good and contributes towards their enjoyment of school.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), but most begin Year 1 with skills that are below average. Standards are rising in Key Stage 1, but they continue to remain below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, standards are exceptionally low in English, mathematics and science. There is a legacy of underachievement brought about by inadequate teaching. This means there are many gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge. In addition, a high proportion of pupils join or leave the school, which interrupts the continuity of their learning and slows progress. Strategies are now being employed successfully to resolve weaknesses, particularly in reading and writing. Consequently, the school's own data and inspection evidence indicate there are green shoots of recovery with standards beginning to rise. Across the school, most pupils are now making satisfactory progress with an increasing proportion making better progress.

The quality of teaching is uneven. There are examples of good teaching which challenges pupils and helps them make good progress. However, the pace of some lessons is occasionally too slow and work is not always well matched to pupils' needs. This leads to inconsistent progress in lessons, especially for some more able pupils. Improved assessment and tracking are helping teachers to plan to meet the needs of their pupils, but this is not yet consistent. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and most pupils behave well. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, although subjects such as religious education, history and geography are not always covered in sufficient depth. Opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning in all subjects are restricted by the facilities and equipment available. In addition, opportunities for cultural development are not broad enough.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management and is well supported by her deputy. They, along with the phase leaders, have an accurate view of school effectiveness and the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Systems for tracking progress and using data to set challenging targets are now more robust. Governors provide satisfactory oversight of the school's work. All leaders know that they need to improve the quality of teaching and learning further throughout the school in order to accelerate pupils' progress and boost their achievement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of provision in this phase is good. Children start in the Nursery with skills that are generally well below those expected for their age. They make good progress in their learning including their personal development, but by the start of the Year 1, they are still below the national average. Good features are the Foundation Stage unit, where both Nursery and Reception children can work collaboratively, and the movement of some of the Reception children into Year 1 so they are stretched academically in numeracy. Assessment information is used well to plan worthwhile and stimulating activities to support the children's learning. However, they do not have access to free flow outdoor play. Children respond with enjoyment to the learning environment and make good progress because their needs are well served by the curriculum and teaching is good. The well-planned teaching of letters and sounds and listening and speaking activities are having a positive impact on improving children's communication skills. The Story Wood area provides first-hand experiences for children to learn and rehearse their learning in a natural environment supporting their physical health.

Children behave well and display very positive attitudes towards learning. They demonstrate independence in their choice of activities and persevere at tasks. Good induction arrangements are in place and children settle well into the learning environment due to the sensitive and patient help they receive. Welfare, health and safety procedures are good and children are well cared for. Leadership is good because staff work together effectively as a team and support each other as well as the children. They are well encouraged to further their professional development by identifying their strengths and acting upon their areas for improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and progress of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Increase the amount of good teaching and, in particular, ensure that teaching is closely matched to pupils' needs and consistently challenges all pupils, especially higher attaining pupils.
- Implement a curriculum with sufficient depth and breadth that meets the needs of all pupils and develops skills in literacy and numeracy in different subjects.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils' cultural development, particularly so that they understand better what it is to be part of multicultural Britain and an international citizen.

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.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science. However, achievement is satisfactory overall considering children's very low attainment on entry in the EYFS. By the end of Year 2 in 2008, standards in writing were similar to those of the previous year. However, they improved significantly in reading and mathematics, with an increasing number of pupils working at the level expected for their age. Boys achieved significantly better than girls. Despite this, standards remained below the national average. By the end of Year 6, the unvalidated test results for 2008 show that standards in English, mathematics and science were lower than the previous year and exceptionally low. In English, only about half of pupils attained the level

expected for their age. A high number of pupils joined or left this class other than at the usual times. This interruption to the continuity of their learning severely affected their achievements. Inadequate teaching early in Key Stage 2 also meant that many pupils had gaps in their skills and knowledge.

The picture is now improving. Better assessment and teaching mean that most pupils are now making satisfactory progress. An increasing proportion are doing better than that. The legacy of underachievement is being addressed which is beginning to narrow the gap with national outcomes. Evidence suggests that standards will rise this year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Their needs are well understood and met through appropriately targeted support. Pupils who are at the early stage of learning English are also soundly supported and their achievement is satisfactory. Those who are more able do not always make as much progress as they could because the work is not always sufficiently challenging.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Their cultural development is underdeveloped because pupils have limited understanding of the cultural diversity around them. Good relationships abound and, consequently, pupils behave well and display positive attitudes towards learning. They are keen to work and share their experiences with others. Their attendance is satisfactory despite the school's good efforts to encourage and reward regular attenders. They have a good grasp of the importance of healthy lifestyles and older pupils have a good understanding of the dangers of smoking and taking drugs. Pupils feel valued and listened to and feel secure in going to staff for help when they need it. Pupils contribute effectively to the life of the school and wider community. In school, they take on responsibilities of being playground 'buddies' readily. They show a concern and empathy for others, as demonstrated in their readiness to raise money for various charities to support those who are less fortunate than themselves. The school council promotes pupils' views and is engaged in projects to improve the school environment. They feel proud to take part in interviewing the new deputy headteacher. Their participation in fund raising and their personal and social skills help to prepare them satisfactorily for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory but improving. There is an increased proportion of good teaching, demonstrated by high expectations, good challenge and motivational activities. In addition, the use of assessment, better planning and more focused teaching are helping to increase rates of pupils' progress. An increasing range of assessment for learning strategies supports learning well. However, the proportion of lessons that are satisfactory remains too high, which is insufficient to narrow the attainment gap in some classes. In these lessons, the pace is sometimes too slow, work is not targeted sharply enough and there is insufficient challenge for some pupils, particularly the higher attainers. Relationships are good. Pupils work and cooperate well together. Pupils who need additional help benefit from the good level of support provided by teaching assistants.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The school has rightly provided a sharp focus on developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Initiatives such as visual literacy, guided reading and linking letters and sounds are beginning to increase pupils' skills and confidence in reading and writing. Literacy and numeracy skills are increasingly being utilised in other subjects, but further extension is required. For example, some pupils in Year 3 are able to write at length about Victorian toys after doing some research from the Internet. The provision for science is variable. Good opportunities are provided for some pupils to develop their investigative and problem solving skills, but these are inconsistent, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. Pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy their French lessons. They take great pleasure in reciting colours and counting to 10. Subjects such as history and geography are taught using the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), but they are often studied in insufficient depth. Provision for religious education is variable across the school. Opportunities for ICT are not always fully utilised to support the curriculum. The ICT suite is cramped and hardware is nearing the end of its productive life. The Story Wood forest school enhances learning well and provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of independence. A range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors supports the curriculum satisfactorily.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a calm learning environment for its pupils. The attention paid to the pupils' personal, social and emotional development is noteworthy. The school provides exceptionally good support for pupils' social and emotional development, and to supporting pupils with challenging behaviour so that they manage their anger in a positive way. Those new to school settle well because they are given good support. The school works in close partnership with parents and a wide range of agencies so ensuring the pupils' welfare needs are well met. The school is safe and secure and arrangements for safeguarding children are robust. Risk assessments and health and safety procedures are in place. Pupils know and refer to their learning targets but the quality of marking varies. Not all marking provides pupils with clear enough guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The leadership and management by the headteacher are exceptional. She provides clear vision and direction and has an accurate view of school effectiveness and the quality of teaching and learning across the school. She has been intolerant of inadequate teaching and has addressed this with strong determination. She is supported well by her deputy. School self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders are focusing precisely on the areas that need improving and are beginning to introduce effective strategies to make it happen. They know that they need to be more effective in raising the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school in order to accelerate pupils' progress and boost their achievement. Through the introduction of improved tracking procedures, senior leaders are starting to analyse carefully pupils' performance and to identify where there is potential underachievement. They are beginning to hold staff to account for rates of pupils' progress at termly meetings. Phase leaders are increasing their

understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through a broad range of monitoring and evaluation activity. They are now beginning to use the outcomes of this to provide appropriate support to bring about change. There has been an improvement in teaching and learning but prolonged staff absences and resignations continue to hamper steady and consistent progress.

The governing body is increasing its understanding of its roles and responsibilities and is becoming more active in the school. Governors are beginning to hold school leaders to account. Most parents express satisfaction with the school. A good range of local activities has increased community cohesion but opportunities are insufficiently broad to ensure pupils increase their understanding of national and international issues. Given the school leaders' success in developing the school, there is good capacity to improve.

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## 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	3

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

11 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Perry Common Junior and Infant School (NC), Birmingham, B23 5AJ

Thank you very much for helping us with the inspection of your school. You made us feel very welcome and we thoroughly enjoyed spending time with you. We decided that Perry Common Junior and Infant School is a satisfactory but improving school. Here are some of the things we found out:

- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- You enjoy school, feel safe and most of you behave well.
- The adults in school are working hard to help you learn and to make sure that you are well cared for, valued and supported.
- Your teachers help you make satisfactory progress in your work and a number of you are beginning to make good progress.
- The headteacher and staff are working hard to make sure that the school gets even better.

There are times when not all children in school do as well as they could. So we have asked the school to make sure that teaching always helps you to make good progress, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. We want your teachers to match work more closely to your needs and expect more from some of you. We have also asked the school to teach you different interesting subjects that you will all enjoy. Finally, we have also asked your teachers to help you find out more about the different faiths and cultures of people that live in this country and the world.

You can help your teachers by always working hard and behaving well.

I wish you all the very best for the future. Yours faithfully

Paul Weston

Her Majesty's Inspector