



# Maidensbridge Primary School

Inspection Report

Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 103779  
**LEA** Dudley  
**Inspection number** 276992  
**Inspection dates** 17 January 2006 to 18 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Tony DobellAI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Beachcroft Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Kingswinford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		West Midlands DY6 0HX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818405
<b>Number on roll</b>	173	<b>Fax number</b>	01384 818410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Clr Dave Tyler
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Andy Hale

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This below average sized primary school on the western edge of Dudley draws its pupils mainly from the local area, although a number come from further afield because their parents choose this school. Children join Reception with typically average levels of knowledge and learning skills. The large majority of pupils are from White, Western European backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

Maidensbridge is an effective school with some outstanding features, giving good value for money. It judges its own effectiveness generally in line with inspection findings but, in some respects, too modestly. Pupils achieve well overall and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. Children make good progress in the Reception class and have reached standards higher than expected by the time they join Year 1. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding, and pupils enjoy interesting and stimulating learning activities in most lessons. The school values all pupils for what they can offer and all have full access to a good curriculum. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, not least because they thoroughly enjoy their learning. The school cares well for its pupils in a calm, safe and purposeful environment, and they and their parents are rightly proud of their school. Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher is providing outstanding leadership and is well supported by his colleagues and governors in realising his vision for the school. The school has made significant progress under his leadership and has a very good capacity to improve further. Staff recognise that the school needs to give pupils a clearer understanding of life in a multicultural society and that the school needs to use its grounds more effectively to support learning.

**Grade: 2**

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision**

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Give pupils more opportunities, directly and indirectly, to understand and appreciate other cultures so that they are able to take their place in a multicultural society.
- Develop the school's grounds, which have considerable potential, so that they are more effective in promoting pupils' learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

Achievement is above average and pupils make good progress throughout the school. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2005, standards were above expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. In these tests at the end of Year 6 in 2005, pupils achieved above average standards in English mathematics and science. These results, whilst above average, were not as good as those attained in 2004 when pupils' achievement was exceptionally high. The school predicts that standards will improve in 2006 and inspection evidence supports this view. This is because the school has introduced very effective systems for tracking and assessing pupils' progress in order to plan their future learning so that their standards improve well. Older pupils were able to discuss their challenging targets for

improvement with insight and understanding. Children make good progress in the Reception class because their learning is effectively structured and they settle quickly into the school. Standards are above expectations when they enter Year 1. Standards in English and mathematics are above average and there is evidence of good progress. For example, pupils in Year 2 all had a good understanding of the principles of multiplication after only three lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of science, not least because they have good opportunities for investigative and experimental work. Standards in information and communication technology meet, and sometimes exceed, expectations. There are good examples of information and communication technology supporting learning in other subjects, for example: music, so that pupils achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well because their learning is managed effectively and they are given sensitive support in class.

**Grade: 2**

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

development are good. There are particular strengths in moral and social development, but not enough is done to develop pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. One pupil commented that he 'had enjoyed school ever since Reception'. A father commented that, if his child was being difficult, he threatened not to let him come to school! Because pupils enjoy learning, their behaviour and attitudes, both in class and at play, are outstanding. Attendance is above average. Pupils and parents confirm that bullying is very rare but that any instances are resolved quickly and sensitively. The school has held discussions with pupils, parents and the school meal providers about diet and these have helped pupils to appreciate the importance of healthy eating. For example, pupils have a fruit only break in the morning. They have a clear understanding of how to keep safe and older pupils cheerfully accept responsibilities throughout the school to ensure that it is safe and secure. Pupils have a basic understanding of democracy through the working of the school council and invited a local councillor to explain to them why there is a proposal to close their school. Good attention is paid to basic skills and to developing pupils' social skills so that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education and for their working lives.

**Grade: 2**

### **Quality of provision**

#### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching is good, and sometimes outstanding. For example, in Reception, well-established routines mean that children changed efficiently for a

physical education lesson when they had very good opportunities to work creatively, independently and safely on apparatus. In an English lesson in Year 2, imaginative learning activities planned by the teacher and teaching assistant totally engaged the attention of all pupils who were given every opportunity to develop and articulate their ideas so that their learning was of high quality. Similarly, in an English lesson in Year 6, pupils questioned each other about their writing and their questions showed that they had a very thorough understanding of the work they were doing. Where, occasionally, teaching is only satisfactory, pupils do not make the same amount of progress because the pace is slower. In most lessons, excellent relationships motivate pupils to give of their best and they thoroughly enjoy their learning and are keen to complete their work. Enjoyment results from effective challenge for different groups of pupils so that all can see that they are making progress. Lower-attaining pupils, including those with learning difficulties, are sensitively supported by teaching assistants and so make good progress. One pupil commented about a teaching assistant 'she is always there for me'. Sensitive support from all adults enables all groups to learn effectively and achieve well.

**Grade: 2**

### **Curriculum and other activities**

Pupils benefit from a wide range of work, which meets their needs well. Time is found for local studies and weeks devoted to particular themes in a good curriculum which meets all requirements. Links are made between subjects to reinforce pupils' understanding. For example, the nature of symmetry is explored in mathematics, art and design, and information and communication technology. The curriculum for children in Reception is stimulating and parents comment on how quickly their children make progress. A good range of visits, including a residential visit for Year 6, and visitors enrich the curriculum. For example, a parent governor who is registered blind shared his experiences with pupils in Year 2 and described his range of technical aids which they were then able to try. There is also a good range of activities outside lessons such as art and story writing for younger pupils and sporting activities, choir, recorders and computers for older pupils. There is a good programme for personal, health and social education, including suitably pitched sex and relationships education and an awareness of the dangers of some drugs and substances. There is appropriate emphasis on leading a healthy and safe lifestyle. These are good links with a local secondary school for modern languages but other curricular links are less well developed. More use could be made of the school grounds as an 'outdoor classroom' to support learning.

**Grade: 2**

### **Care, guidance and support**

The good level of care shown by everyone in the school makes pupils feel

thoroughly safe and secure. They are happy to share any concerns with adults, knowing that these will be 'sorted out'. Adults know all pupils well and pupils know that they are valued. This contributes well to the confidence which they all bring to their learning. There are good arrangements for child protection and for ensuring pupils' health and safety. Very good systems of guidance underpin pupils' learning and enable challenging targets to be set for their future learning. There is scope for further minor developments to make them even more effective. Parents, in a very high return of questionnaires and in discussion with inspectors, are unanimously appreciative of the high levels of care provided by the school.

**Grade: 2**

## **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is providing outstanding leadership. In his short time in the school, he has clarified its vision, and significantly improved systems for assessment and target setting have raised aspirations and increased progress. Many parents wrote to inspectors expressing their appreciation of his leadership and support. They and their children appreciate his frequent and reassuring presence around the school. The headteacher is fully supported by his colleagues and governors and there is a clear unity of purpose throughout the school. The Foundation Stage and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties are led and managed well. All are committed to enabling pupils to learn in a secure and stimulating environment so that they succeed academically and develop into confident young people able to lead successful lives. Subjects are managed effectively at this stage, and subject leaders are becoming increasingly successful as they make more use of data to plan improvement. Senior managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and potential for improvement because consultations involve all staff, parents and pupils. There is an innovative approach to strategic planning which is enabling the school to improve systematically. The school evaluates its work effectively, if sometimes cautiously. This is because the headteacher sensibly waits for initiatives to work before judging them as effective. His systematic approach means that the school has a very good capacity for further improvement, having improved well since the last inspection. Governors are supportive. They have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and needs, keep a close track of the use of resources and ensure that finances are well managed. They appreciate that the community sees the school as a valuable asset. They recognise that this is a good school within reach of becoming outstanding. Improvement is secure and relatively modest changes, for example to make subject leadership more consistently effective, would enable the school to take another step forward.

**Grade: 2**

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	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	2	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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	2	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 into your school, being so friendly and polite to us, and talking to us about your learning and your lives in the school. We think that yours is a good school in many ways:

- You make good progress and achieve good standards.
- You thoroughly enjoy learning and your behaviour is excellent.
- Your teachers work very hard and make your lessons interesting.
- You are all treated equally and valued for what you can do.
- You support each other very well, have very good attitudes to learning and are rarely absent.
- You know that it is important to eat healthily and to exercise regularly.
- Your headteacher's leadership is outstanding and he has good plans to make the school even better.

All these things mean that you grow into confident young people, happy to say what you think, and well prepared for your future lives. We think that two things would improve your school further:

- You need to understand more clearly what it means to live in a multicultural society.
- The school's grounds could be used better to help you to learn.

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