

Wanstead Church School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	102841
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	376772
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2012
Lead inspector	Angela Konarzewski

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matthew Horne
Headteacher	Peter Lewis
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Angela Konarzewski

Additional inspector

David Wolfson

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 15 lessons taught by nine teachers, observed various group activities and listened to pupils reading. The inspectors attended assemblies, observed playtimes and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, and parents and carers. The inspectors also looked at a wide range of documentation provided by the school, including safeguarding documents, the school's self-evaluation and development plans, records of pupils' attainment and progress, and pupils' workbooks. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection; in addition, the responses from 116 parents and carers, 38 pupils and 27 staff were also analysed.

Information about the school

Wanstead Church School is an average-sized primary school, with one class per year group. Pupils come predominantly from a White British background. While the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, most speak English as their first language. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision includes a Nursery where children attend on a part-time basis. About half of them transfer from the Nursery to Reception. The proportion of pupils identified as disabled or having special educational needs is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The headteacher has resigned and will be taking up a new post in April 2012. The governing body is putting interim arrangements in place. The deputy headteacher took up post at the school in January 2012. The school holds the International Schools Intermediate Award.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Wanstead Church School is a good school. This view is confirmed by the vast majority of parents and carers. In the words of one parent, 'We are proud to be part of this school. We are all very happy, both with the education and nurturing aspects.'
- All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Attainment in English by the end of Years 2 and 6 is high, and progress in reading is outstanding. Achievement in writing in Key Stage 2, and in mathematics in both key stages, is not as high as that in reading.
- Teaching is good overall, with some outstanding practice in Reception and in Years 5 and 6. Here, teachers plan in detail for all pupils to ensure tasks are well matched to their needs and abilities. Good questioning and high expectations successfully challenge pupils' thinking and extend their learning. This practice is not consistently applied across the school, and there are also inconsistencies in the quality of marking and feedback to pupils.
- Inspectors agree with all parents, carers and pupils that the school is a very safe place. Although a small minority of parents, carers and pupils expressed some concern about behaviour, evidence from direct observation in and around the school, and scrutiny of the school's behaviour records, indicate that pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons is outstanding. Attendance and punctuality are also exceptionally high.
- The governing body and headteacher together provide effective leadership and management for the school. Leadership at other levels in the school is less well developed. Leaders and managers have addressed the issues from the last inspection. Safeguarding procedures are now robust and improvement plans include detailed success criteria so that the school can precisely monitor its development.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By summer 2012, raise attainment and accelerate progress in writing in Key Stage 2 and in mathematics from Years 1 to 6 by:
 - tracking pupils' progress consistently and precisely to inform planning so that all lessons are tailored to meet individual needs
 - ensuring consistency in marking and feedback, identifying clearly the next steps pupils at all levels of ability need to take to improve their work, and giving pupils regular opportunities to respond to feedback from teachers
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

- Develop the capacity for sustaining improvements over the course of the next year by:
 - developing leadership and management skills further at all levels
 - providing all staff, including teaching assistants, with regular opportunities to engage in professional development.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most children join the Nursery with levels of knowledge and skills that are in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 so that attainment by the end of Year 2 is well above the national average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. In Key Stage 2, all groups of pupils continue to achieve well, so that by the end of Year 6, attainment in English remains well above the national average while attainment in mathematics is above average. Achievement in reading is outstanding across the school, and standards in reading are high at the end of both key stages. The love of books, cultivated in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is sustained across the school so that all groups of pupils are very fluent readers by the time they leave Year 6. One girl in Year 5 was heard to explain, 'I've read this book before, but I'm allowed to read it again because I loved it, and it will be different this time.' Pupils who are slow to learn to read are identified early and given appropriate support to ensure they also make good progress. The pace of learning in Years 1 to 4 is less rapid than in other years because teaching does not match the needs of pupils of different levels of ability with the same precision as in other years. The learning and performance of pupils observed in lessons during the inspection shows that all groups of pupils, including those identified as disabled or who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language,

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make at least good progress. Across the school, pupils are enthusiastic learners, keen to develop their skills of working both individually and as a team. Although their basic skills are good, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to apply their writing and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school and most acknowledge, correctly, that the school meets their children's needs so that they make good progress.

Quality of teaching

All parents and pupils expressed the view that teaching is good and this is borne out by inspection findings. Most teaching is at least good, and some is outstanding. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, where independence is strongly promoted, children benefit from being given meaningful opportunities to write for real purposes and audiences by, for example, writing invitations to a Chinese tea party to celebrate Chinese New Year. High-quality resources, both indoors and in the recently extended outdoor area, promote learning effectively across the six areas of learning, and boys especially enjoy opportunities for outdoor learning, for example by writing their invitations outside. In one lesson, the teacher's motivational style inspired the children as they learnt to sound out words step by step. Her excellent, humorous demonstration of the pronunciation of 'th' provided a clear model for children to copy with enjoyment, and enabled them to recognise 'th' in words which they could then read with confidence.

Where teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, give clear explanations and have high expectations of what pupils can do, for example in a Year 4 French lesson on colourful creatures, and in a Year 6 science lesson on gravity, pupils make good or better gains in their learning. Teaching in such lessons has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to reflect deeply on spiritual matters and are given opportunities to express wonder at, for example, the inside of a pomegranate, or the symbolism of poppies at their Remembrance service. Where teaching is less successful, pupils at different levels of attainment are not consistently challenged to extend and consolidate their learning. In a few lessons, pupils were required to listen to the teacher for too long before tackling set tasks. In these lessons, teaching assistants appeared to be unclear as to their role and were too often simply sitting, listening to the class teacher during the teaching input. In some classes, especially in Key Stage 2, teachers' marking is not sufficiently thorough and pupils do not have enough opportunities to respond to their comments and suggestions.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Although a small minority of parents and carers, and pupils, feel that behaviour is not always good, especially in lessons, inspectors observed that pupils' behaviour and attitudes in lessons and around the school are exemplary. Other evidence shows that this is typical of behaviour at other times. The 'golden rules' are regularly revisited to ensure that pupils understand what is expected to maintain the calm, secure

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atmosphere they all enjoy. Even on the few occasions when lessons do not fully engage them, they remain attentive. Older pupils care for younger ones, most notably at lunchtimes where Year 6 pupils assist the midday staff with managing the needs of the younger pupils. Children are taught excellent manners in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where very young children will hold open the door for each other and sit down calmly to eat their healthy fruit snacks. These habits are promoted as pupils move up the school so that they develop outstanding social skills, preparing them very well for life beyond school. Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong, coupled with empathy, so they do not judge one another negatively when they make mistakes, for example helping each other when they drop something. Pupils seek out opportunities to praise one another, for example when a Year 5 pupil commented to her friend, 'That's lovely writing; it's really good.' Positive attitudes are taught well, especially through assemblies, where the school's values are sensitively, but uncompromisingly, promoted. As a result, pupils report that there is very little bullying of any kind, but when such incidents do occur, they are dealt with effectively. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are exceptionally high because they all feel safe and highly valued, and so they thoroughly enjoy coming to school.

Leadership and management

Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, the school has improved significantly since its last inspection. The headteacher's high aspirations for the school are supported by a strong governing body, staff, parents and carers, and the local community, including the church to which the school is affiliated. This has had a very positive impact on addressing weaknesses. Consequently, systems for managing safeguarding have been transformed since the last inspection, when they were an area for improvement, and are now extremely robust. Evidence of best practice is visible all around the school which has become a flagship of excellence that is used as a model for other schools. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires agreed that their children are safe at school, supporting inspection findings and the school's self-evaluation of this aspect of its work.

Although leaders and managers, including middle managers, have begun to extend their leadership roles, some have yet to develop skills in measuring the impact of new initiatives on driving whole-school improvement. Some staff feel that they do not have sufficient opportunities for professional development, especially teaching assistants, and, although teaching and learning are monitored, leaders acknowledge that some inconsistencies in practice remain. However, the trend of sustained improvement in achievement, behaviour and safety shows that the school has the capacity for sustained improvement.

The curriculum is good, and the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key strength of the school's work. A wide range of visits, visitors and clubs enrich the basic provision, including some outstanding music and singing in lessons delivered by a specialist music teacher. Most notably, the residential school journeys in Years 4, 5 and 6 provide pupils with rich opportunities to gain independence and to engage in outdoor pursuits. The school especially values the

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experiences offered to pupils by the five-day trip to France where pupils are able to practise their French language skills learnt in school. This year's pupils also visited The Somme, and the writing produced, following this visit, gives insight into the spiritual benefits of such an experience. One boy wrote, 'When I first saw the memorials and the graves, I was simply stunned. Over 72,000 people died whose bodies had never been identified; they were all named on this breathtaking memorial. As I walked towards it, I could see all the names coming into focus.' The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination effectively, and holds the International Schools Intermediate Award from The British Council, in recognition of its valuable links abroad, most notably with a school in Uganda.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.

27 January 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Wanstead Church School, Wanstead, London E11 2SS

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting many of you, and were very interested in your work and in your comments about your school in meetings and through the questionnaires. We also enjoyed hearing some of you read.

We agree with you that Wanstead Church School is a good school where all groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points. You achieve well because most teaching is good and some of it is outstanding. In a small minority of lessons, teaching is not quite as good because tasks are not always closely matched to your learning needs. Although some of you think that behaviour is not always as good as it could be, inspectors found that your behaviour in and out of lessons is outstanding because you are taught excellent social skills and you feel exceptionally safe. Your attendance and punctuality are high because you love coming to school. The school's curriculum provides opportunities for good quality learning which contribute well to your achievements and to your excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders and managers have addressed the issue from the last inspection concerning safeguarding so that procedures are now very rigorous and effective.

We have asked your teachers to try and make your achievement in writing and mathematics as good as it is in reading by marking your work in more detail and giving you more opportunities to respond to feedback. We would also like them to give you more opportunities to practise your writing and numeracy skills in other subjects. In addition, we would like leaders and managers to make all teaching as good as the best that we saw in the school, and to develop their leadership skills so that the school continues to sustain improvements.

Yours sincerely

Angela Konarzewski
Lead inspector

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