

# Wyvern School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	110257
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	378070
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Paul Edwards

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	320
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jackie Buckingham-Shum
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Hann
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2008
<b>School address</b>	Aylesbury Street Wolverton Milton Keynes MK12 5HU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 312275
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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	23–24 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	378070



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Edwards

Additional inspector

Adam Hewitt

Additional inspector

Liz Kissane

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 23 lessons taught by 11 teachers, visited two assemblies and listened to pupils reading. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, teaching staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Formal meetings were not held with parents and carers although inspectors took the opportunity to talk to them before school. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at governing body minutes, the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, safeguarding procedures, pupils' work, and teachers' planning and marking. Inspectors took note of the questionnaires completed by 146 parents and carers and those completed by staff.

## Information about the school

Wyvern is a larger than average-sized infant school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, who come from a wide range of backgrounds, is well above that seen nationally. The largest groups are from White British and Pakistani heritage. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to that seen nationally. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Nursery classes, the large majority staying for a whole day, once a week. There are also three separate Reception classes.

There is an on-site nursery that provides wrap-around care for children. This is privately managed and subject to a separate inspection.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. However it is not yet better than this as there needs to be more outstanding teaching. Occasionally, teachers miss the opportunity to accelerate the progress of the more-able pupils soon enough in lessons and spend too long in explaining the activities to pupils. This limits opportunities for them to find things out for themselves and to move on quickly to more challenging work.
- Pupils' achievement is good. A dip in national assessments in 2010 was tackled effectively through rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. Consequently, attainment rose in 2011 and pupils' attainment is rising in reading, writing and mathematics. The gaps in attainment between boys and girls identified in the Nursery are closing by the end of Year 2, the result of effective intervention strategies.
- Effective teaching across the school results in most pupils making good progress. Well-targeted support and effective interventions are ensuring those at an early stage of learning English make rapid progress in their acquisition of language skills. There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their improving writing skills through planned activities across subjects.
- Pupils' good behaviour ensures that disruptions to lessons are a very rare occurrence. They feel safe in school and have a good understanding of safety issues. Pupils of all backgrounds cooperate very well in lessons and play together happily. They understand and value each other's cultures, ensuring the development of a harmonious working environment.
- The school is improving as a result of the senior leaders' high expectations, drive and determination. Effective monitoring of teaching, with clearly targeted professional development is improving the pace of pupils' learning. Rigorous challenge by the governing body, coupled with its strong support, is aiding school leaders to accurately evaluate the school's work and implement well-planned actions to tackle key priorities.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By September 2012, improve the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring that teachers achieve an appropriate balance of the time they spend on explanation and that given to pupils to complete their work
  - allowing the more-able pupils to move on to more challenging activities sooner in lessons
  - eliminate the reliance on worksheets for writing activities.
- Prepare a plan that ensures teachers use opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Almost all parents and carers responding to the questionnaire commented that their children were making good progress and their views are accurate. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is average in reading, writing and mathematics, demonstrating good progress from their starting points. Children enter the Nursery classes with skills and abilities that are well below those expected for their age and with particular weaknesses in their communication, language and literacy skills. They make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas of learning, entering Year 1 with attainment that is below average. Children's understanding of the links between sounds and letters (phonics) develops well. For example, children in a Reception class were seen to spell and use complex words accurately and in context.

Good progress in reading continues across the school, the result of the consistent approach in teaching daily phonics sessions, and older pupils demonstrate increasingly accurate spelling skills when writing sentences. For those pupils who find reading particularly challenging, daily, individual support sessions, taught by specialists, are closing the gap between them and other pupils. Specialist support is utilised effectively to provide in-class support for those pupils who speak English as an additional language, particularly those from Pakistani backgrounds, narrowing the gap between them and other pupils in their reading and writing.

The introduction of a commercial writing programme that is implemented systematically is ensuring all pupils are developing a structured approach to their writing. Their skills are progressing well, particularly those of the boys so that the gender gap is narrowing quickly. A sharper focus on boys' writing from Reception onwards, providing more interesting books and writing activities that engage their interest are having a positive impact. Most boys express a positive enjoyment in reading matching that of the girls. Number and calculating skills develop well from simple counting activities in the Nursery classes to more complex calculations in Year 2. They use their skills well when solving problems, as was seen in a typically good

Year 2 lesson where pupil estimated accurately the volumes of different liquids in various containers.

While the overall picture shows all groups of pupils to be making good progress, some more-able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is more evident in writing where challenging activities are not provided soon enough in lessons. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress overall. A good balance of in-class support and well-targeted, one-to-one interventions is providing them with a secure foundation for reading. In writing, they make good progress through being taught in smaller groups.

### **Quality of teaching**

The inspectors confirm the views of parents and carers that teaching is good. Teaching is typically lively, engages the pupils' interest and motivates them effectively. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children in a Nursery class improved their speaking and counting skills as they joined with the teacher in singing 'we climbed aboard the pirate ship'. Challenging questioning by the teachers is evident throughout the school and encourages pupils to respond at length, developing their speaking skills well. Teachers adapt the questioning skills effectively according to the ability and varying needs of pupils. For example, with a group of lower attaining Year 2 boys, the teacher was careful to phrase questions that engaged and motivated them well, improving their use of verbs and adjectives in their writing.

Teachers plan carefully for pupils of different abilities. Occasionally, the translation into practice is not always secure and more-able pupils are not encouraged to move on to the more challenging work soon enough in lessons. This impinges on the opportunity for them to make better progress in lessons, particularly when the teachers spend too long explaining tasks. Pupils have a good understanding of their targets and what they are expected to achieve, reflecting the good dialogue that takes place with their teachers. There is a good balance of oral and written feedback so that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers regularly assess children's achievements and they form part of the useful 'Learning Journey'. However, the school rightly recognises the need for these to be more easily accessible for parents and carers.

There is good variety of effective methods to teach reading. Pupils are taught in ability groups for daily phonic sessions and these stimulate children's enthusiasm for early reading skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Guided reading sessions stimulate older pupils' enjoyment of reading, Small group work and the opportunity for individuals to read to an adult help those who are not reading at the level expected for their age to improve their skills. Teaching assistants contribute well to lessons, supporting pupils learning English as an additional language. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are also supported effectively by skilled support assistants.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through teachers' planning and curriculum planning which encourage partner work, working

in groups, role play and reflection on their work through discussions at the end of sessions. For example, as part of Year 2 mathematics activities, pupils worked well in small groups improving their understanding of liquid measurements.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

During the inspection, pupils behaved well in lessons, during lunchtime and at play times. Pupils say that this is normal, and that behaviour is usually good. Almost all parents and carers responding to the questionnaire were very happy with the general behaviour and very few believed that lessons were disrupted by behaviour. Pupils know about bullying and say that there is a 'little name calling' but cannot recall any specific issues. The school has talked to pupils about different types of bullying and issues are addressed effectively through its personal and social development programme. Movement around the larger Edwardian building, upstairs and downstairs, is well ordered and pupils are extremely good at following rules to avoid mishaps.

Pupils spoken to feel they are well looked after and said that they feel extremely safe in school. Their parents and carers, almost without exception, agreed with this and many commented very favourably on the high quality of care provided by the staff. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds get on very well with one another and the school is a very cohesive setting. For their age, pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of racism and do not believe there is any racist behaviour. The curriculum ensures pupils develop tolerance and a good understanding of the different cultures and backgrounds represented in the school. The school works hard to encourage the very small number whose attendance and punctuality is a concern. As a result of improvements, attendance is now average with most pupils being punctual, enabling lessons to start promptly.

### **Leadership and management**

Senior leaders and members of the governing body have high aspirations for the school. Priorities for school improvement have been well chosen and focus clearly on accelerating learning and improving teaching. There is clear evidence that opportunities for teachers to participate in mentoring programmes and individual coaching programmes have improved the quality of teaching and learning. The development of detailed tracking and assessment information provides a comprehensive picture of the progress of all groups of pupils. Governors and the headteacher are astute in their use of this information, determining the impact of additional staffing resources on pupils' learning. This clarity has ensured resources to improve reading and writing skills have been effective and demonstrates the school's good capacity for further improvement.

The curriculum contributes well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example opportunities to learn about different cultures. Their participation in the 'Wolverton Lantern Festival' and construction of their own impressive lanterns enabled them to develop a greater understanding of how 'light' is a common theme in different religions. There are missed opportunities, however, for pupils to improve their writing skills in subjects such as history and geography.

Leaders have a clear commitment to ensuring all pupils have equality of opportunity and the school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. For example, they correctly identified the need to ensure boys made better progress in both reading and writing and the impact of strategies has resulted in a narrowing of the gap between boys and girls. School leaders, including governors, ensure the safety of all pupils and staff through stringent checks. Staff training ensures all are kept up to date with the latest child protection procedures. Staff are vigilant in meeting the needs of those pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The governing body is rigorous in ensuring the safety of the site and that risk assessments for all activities meet requirements. Parents and carers are very positive about the quality of leadership and the links between home and school. They are particularly appreciative of the sessions where they can learn about how reading and writing are taught in school.



## 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](http://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 February 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Wyvern School, Wolverton MK12 5HU**

Thank you for making us all so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you, watching you work and listening to some of you read

These are some of the strengths of the school.

- You school provides you with a good education.
- You behave well in lessons and at break times. You are polite and friendly and you enjoy school. You say you feel very safe and that the adults at school look after you very well. We are pleased the attendance has improved and it is now similar to that seen in most schools.
- Teachers work hard to help you improve your reading, writing and mathematics.
- Those in charge of the school look after you well, so you feel safe and happy.

We have asked those in charge of the school to make it better by:

- making sure teaching improves further through:
  - giving you sufficient time in lessons to complete more work
  - allowing those of you who find work a little easy to move on to more challenging activities sooner in lessons
  - giving you fewer worksheets for writing activities.
- providing you with more opportunities to practise writing skills in other subjects.

Thank you once again for talking to us and particularly to those of you who came to speak to us. We hope you really continue to enjoy your reading. You can help to make the school better by letting your teacher know if you find the work too easy.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards  
Lead inspector

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