

Werrington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124075
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	359578
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Derek Aitken

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jason Nash
Headteacher	Nicola Walker
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fourteen teachers were observed teaching 19 lessons. In addition, inspectors observed two lessons taken by teaching assistants which included focused support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A scrutiny of pupils' work was also conducted. Meetings were held with governors, staff and groups of pupils, and discussions were held with a very few parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documents, including policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils, self-evaluation records and assessment information. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from 101 parents and carers, 99 pupils and 19 staff.

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

- How successfully are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported in their learning and progress?
- How good is pupils' cultural development?
- How well are pupils' basic skills being promoted in lessons and across the curriculum?
- Is the recent improvement in the academic outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage being sustained?

Information about the school

Werrington is larger than most primary schools. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities fluctuates from year to year but is currently below average. These pupils have a range of difficulties including behavioural difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two Nursery classes and one Reception class. In addition, a very few Reception pupils are currently taught in a mixed-age class with Year 1 pupils. An on-site setting, Werrington out of school club, is privately managed and subject to a separate inspection. The headteacher took up post in September 2008. In January 2009, the school embarked on a local authority programme to improve standards in literacy and numeracy. The school has Healthy Schools status and its other awards include the Activemark.

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

2

Main findings

Werrington is a satisfactory school which has made substantial improvement in the last two years. A much larger proportion of pupils than was formerly the case are reaching the levels expected nationally for all year groups. This has been accompanied by a rise in the rate of pupils' progress. Attainment in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 is average. There is, however, some variation between pupils' progress in English and mathematics, especially in Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress in writing has accelerated, but some pupils underachieve in mathematics. This is due to residual weaknesses in basic calculation and recording skills which affect pupils' confidence and capacity to apply their knowledge in new situations. Pupils' overall achievement and outcomes are satisfactory and this means that Werrington prepares pupils satisfactorily for the next stages of their lives.

Recent improvements are a result of well-considered management decisions that have focused on building the success of the school from 'the bottom up'. As a result, outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are now good. The proportion of good lessons in other year groups has also increased. There is, however, further work to be done to raise pupils' achievement by ensuring all teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of their pupils and promote their independence by involving them fully in assessment.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to several aspects of pupils' personal development, including their cultural awareness. However, pupils have fewer opportunities in mathematics than in English to practise their basic skills in other subjects.

The capacity to improve further is good. The headteacher's highly effective leadership provides the school with a clear sense of direction. Self-evaluation is rigorous and very accurate, especially at senior leadership level. Consequently, the school has a sharp idea of its strengths and is tackling areas of weakness systematically. For example, leaders have correctly identified a need to improve the analysis of the information collected on the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and have very recently taken appropriate actions to do this.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics by:
 - eliminating weaknesses in pupils' calculation and recording skills and, in so doing, improve pupils' confidence to apply their knowledge in solving problems
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects.

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- Raise the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring teachers consistently match work to meet the needs of all groups of pupils
 - ensuring teachers make better use of assessment opportunities to involve pupils more fully in their learning.
- Up to 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' achievement is satisfactory. Children's skills when they join Year 1 are generally average, although pupils in the current Year 1 are working at slightly higher levels. This was reflected in a literacy lesson where most pupils demonstrated accurate recall of the key features of basic punctuation. They were also able to provide each other with clear verbal instructions in the correct sequence. Historically, pupils' progress has been variable in English and mathematics, but underachievement has been substantially eliminated in the last two years in most year groups. In Year 6, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is also average, but higher in reading than in mathematics where progress is less consistent. For example, pupils in a good mathematics lesson demonstrated a developing understanding of the steps they needed to take to work out accurately the area of rectilinear shapes. By contrast, in a parallel lesson within the same year group, some weaknesses in pupils' prior knowledge and recording skills resulted in calculation errors and showed a lack of confidence on the part of some pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall in their learning in lessons and in withdrawal sessions. On occasion, they make good progress as, for example, when a small group of pupils in Year 5 made very effective use of opportunities to learn independently when practising their spellings of common words.

Pupils enjoy school and most have positive attitudes to their learning. They relate well to each other and the staff, and are usually responsive in lessons. They say that they feel safe in school, and that almost all pupils behave well. The school's awards for promoting healthy lifestyles are well merited. Pupils have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and say, 'We try to stay hydrated when the weather is hot or after taking exercise.' They contribute well to the school community in a range of useful posts such as school councillors, house captains and monitors. Pupils' workplace skills are satisfactory rather than good. Although pupils' attendance is above average, pupils are sometimes too passive in lessons. This restricts their capacity to develop their collaborative skills to best effect.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching has some strengths. Teachers relate well to pupils and usually manage them well. Good teaching is characterised by strong expectations, activities which capture pupils' imagination and interest, and good use of assessment. In combination, these factors build pupils' confidence, enhance their work ethic and enable them to develop their independent learning skills well. This very positive picture is not yet consistently the norm. In some lessons, work is not fully adapted to meet pupils' needs and activities lack challenge for all groups of learners. Variable use is made of assessment which reduces opportunities for pupils' active involvement in their learning. Sometimes, teachers' questioning strategies are too limited to open up alternative avenues for pupils to extend their understanding of key concepts. Pupils' development of basic skills is weaker on these occasions. A scrutiny of pupils' work broadly reflects the above features, although most of the marking provides useful guidance on how pupils' can improve their work.

The curriculum is adequately matched to pupils' needs. Successful initiatives have been implemented to boost pupils' progress in writing and increasing use is being made of the 'Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning' (SEAL) programme to enhance pupils' personal development. Links with other schools have been exploited well to increase the range of specialist coaching in sports and other physical activities. Pupils enjoy singing and have good opportunities to develop their cultural awareness and pursue their own interests in their learning logs. The curriculum is not yet 'finely tuned' enough to enable all groups,

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including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to achieve well rather than satisfactorily. Teachers are experimenting with different approaches to topic work but the content of the new creative curriculum has not yet been evaluated to ensure coherence and full coverage of basic skills.

The school cares for its pupils well. Good pastoral arrangements support pupils sensitively as they move between year groups. Staff work closely with each other to note and pass on any concerns regarding unexplained changes in pupils' behaviour. Pupils with behavioural and emotional needs are supported well by the in-house counsellor, mentors and teaching assistants, and through the timely involvement of outside agencies. However, the impact of this work on pupils' learning is not always clearly recorded. Transition arrangements, particularly with secondary schools, are firmly established. Pupils in Year 6 have ample opportunities to acquire a clear understanding of what is expected of them at secondary school and the opportunities they can enjoy there. The school's good practice in promoting attendance is underpinned by its firm stance on authorising absence.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's purposeful leadership underpins the trend of improvement. She has worked with considerable skill to tackle weaknesses in standards and pupils' progress. She has established crystal-clear procedures and non-negotiable priorities to raise expectations for staff. Leadership responsibilities have been devolved appropriately to enhance the staff's accountability for pupils' performance. This, in turn, has created good morale and team spirit, as staff steadily acquire expertise in their new roles. The school has made very effective use of its participation in the local authority's programme to improve rates of pupils' progress, although this is currently more evident in writing than in mathematics. The school development plan is rigorous and provides a clear template for future improvement through its single-minded focus on further improving achievement. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is steadily improving its systems for holding school leaders to account for the quality of provision. Governors have clear oversight of the school's good arrangements for safeguarding, which include an unambiguous identification of staff's roles and responsibilities. The school promotes equalities and tackles discrimination to only a satisfactory level as reflected in outcomes for pupils. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion both locally by organising multi-cultural weeks, and through its links with other schools nationally.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start Nursery, their skills and knowledge vary, but overall they are in line with those expected for their age. Skilful leadership and management have ensured that children in Nursery and Reception alike make good progress. Children are provided with a well-balanced curriculum and stimulating resources. They develop very positive attitudes to their learning and their willingness to cooperate with each other enables most of them to complete tasks successfully, even when not directly supervised by staff. On a few occasions, staff miss opportunities to intervene briefly to support the learning of individual children. Children's excellent relationships with adults promote their learning well, as they listen carefully to what their teachers say and most children contribute their ideas spontaneously. Lesson planning takes account of children's interests and shared experiences. For example, children acquire a clear sense of the importance of sequencing when describing what they do in the morning and afternoon and at night. Good safeguarding arrangements and teamwork ensure that children's welfare needs are fully met. Staff react quickly and appropriately to any child who is experiencing temporary discomfort. Leaders have made highly effective use of advice from the local authority to embed the very recent improvements in outcomes for children and to establish a culture of continuous development. For example, a tighter use of assessment systems this year has provided staff with a clearer overview of children's achievements and enabled them to plan more efficiently for the next steps in children's learning.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents' and carers' responses to the questionnaire, as reflected in the percentages in the accompanying table, reflect a good level of satisfaction with the school's work. Although the number of questionnaires returned was average in relation to the school's size, almost 50 comments were received. These were equally divided between positive and negative comments. The most common theme of the latter was concern over the quality of communications with the school. School leaders acknowledge that they need to do more in this respect, for example, by explaining more fully the reasons for the decisions they take. Overall, inspectors endorse parents' and carers' views and this is reflected in the judgements and commentary elsewhere in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Werrington 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 101 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 373 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	45	52	51	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	48	51	50	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	29	61	60	10	10	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	36	59	58	4	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	38	56	55	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	36	56	55	7	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	33	60	59	6	6	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)	25	25	60	59	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	36	58	57	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	29	56	55	9	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	25	56	55	8	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	32	55	54	7	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	42	55	54	2	2	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 are 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 terms 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.



18 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Werrington Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST9 0JU

I would like to thank you for your help when the inspection team visited your school recently. This is what we found out.

Yours is a satisfactory school but there are some good parts to its work. The following are particularly important: almost all of you behave well and have good attitudes to learning; you enjoy sport and opportunities for singing and the chances you have to play a useful part in school life; you have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and you feel safe in school.

By the time you leave school at the end of Year 6 you have made satisfactory progress in your learning. Your standards are average overall, but your progress is better in English than in mathematics. To improve your standards and rate of progress I have asked the teachers to work with you on developing your basic skills in mathematics to give you more confidence when tackling problems. They will also do this by giving you more chances to practise your mathematical skills in other subjects. The teachers should also make sure that they plan lessons carefully so that the work you do is always closely matched to your abilities. They are to make better use of assessment to give you more chances to be involved in your learning and become more independent.

The staff look after you well and the headteacher's good leadership has brought about improvements to your learning and overall progress in the last two years.

You can help by keeping up your good attendance and by working as hard as you can to practise and improve your skills in mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken

Lead inspector

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