

# William Austin Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109560
<b>Local Authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	356575
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Sudworth

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	570
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stan Boelman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dominic Hughes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Austin Road Luton LU3 1UA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 27 lessons taught by 20 members of staff. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, other staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, for example, that relating to safeguarding, curriculum organisation, pupils' work and the information used to track pupils' progress. The 328 questionnaire responses from parents and carers were analysed, as were staff and pupils' responses to their own questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How effective has the school been in closing the gap in performance between boys and girls, and in results between mathematics and English?
- How successful is the school in providing for the large numbers of pupils who are reported to be at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- To what degree is there a continuing difference in attainment between different ethnic groups?

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average junior school. Almost all the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, of which the two predominant groups are Pakistani and Bangladeshi. Around half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. There are five classes in each of Years 3, 4 and 5 and four classes in Year 6. Most of the pupils transfer from the neighbouring infant school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is around the national average. Fewer pupils than usual join or leave the school partway through their junior school education. About a third of the pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, a percentage much higher than that found nationally. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The school has several awards, including National Healthy School Status, Investors in People, the International Schools Award (foundation level) and is a registered ECO school. The school manages its own breakfast club.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It is a happy and caring community in which pupils achieve well. Focused leadership, a motivated staff determined to do their best for the pupils, the active participation of the governing body and the involvement of all staff in the school vision help to ensure that all are working towards the same goals. The pupils also play their part well in this racially harmonious school, where respect for one another ensures pupils get along very well together both at play and at work.

The highly supportive and interested parents and carers express very positive views of the school. As one wrote: 'William Austin is a good school where teachers make every effort to be helpful to parents and children. The atmosphere is of discipline and cooperation.' The pupils' good attitudes to, and engagement in, their learning combined with the good teaching are major factors in their good progress. There is now no significant difference in attainment or rates of progress between boys and girls. The school's teaching approaches support the acquisition of English well for the very high percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language. This is shown by their much improved proficiency in English and communication skills by the end of Year 6 and the general progress that they make in their learning. Pupils do not make as much progress in mathematics as they do in English, largely because of inconsistencies in the way pupils are taught mental calculation skills. Spelling and handwriting are the weakest aspects of pupils' writing because teachers do not always insist on the highest standards. Nevertheless, pupils' overall progress is good and the school regularly meets or exceeds its challenging targets.

Pupils enjoy school and develop well personally. They have a good understanding of how to lead healthy and safe lives. Pupils' strong desire to take part in sport ensures that they exercise regularly. They make a good contribution to the school and local community and readily take on responsibility. Pupils are well prepared for their future education and later life.

The staff ensure that all pupils' needs are met and good provision is made for those who at first find learning more difficult. The high level of engagement with adults and regular sessions to meet these pupils' personal learning needs enable them to make good gains in their learning. Similarly, good arrangements for the most able pupils ensure that they reach above average standards.

The school has a good capacity for further improvement. It has raised pupils' overall attainment since the last inspection. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and it knows itself well. Staff are keen to develop further. Senior leaders and the governing body are effective in monitoring techniques and using the outcomes to drive forward improvements.

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

- Ensure that pupils make even better progress in mathematics by:
  - ensuring that pupils are consistently taught effective strategies to calculate mentally
  - helping parents and carers to understand the school's calculation methods so that they can support their children more effectively at home.
- Improve attainment in writing further by:
  - making sure that staff teach spelling rules consistently and pupils learn words that they frequently spell wrongly
  - demanding a higher quality in pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>2</b>
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Pupils' attainment on entry is slightly below average and many are still acquiring a full competence in learning and understanding English. Pupils make good progress in reaching average standards by the end of Year 6, although progress in English is often better than in mathematics. Pupils make very good progress in reading because of the time devoted to this activity, good library provision and the encouragement which many receive from home. Pupils' attainment in writing is improving well because new techniques to accelerate rates of progress have been successful. For example, in writing for different purposes, pupils are alerted effectively to the features of particular writing styles so that they include them in their work. A Year 5 pupil suggested the following metaphor in one lesson observed: 'The storm is a monster waking angrily from its sleep.' Spelling and handwriting are not always as well developed as other aspects of literacy.

Pakistani pupils on the whole attain less well than Bangladeshi pupils, but both groups attain more highly than their respective groups nationally. Pupils progress well in their speaking because of the good opportunities provided to answer questions in class and a style of questioning that requires pupils to explain their answers fully. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the attention paid to their individual needs and good adult support.

Pupils have a good understanding of safe and unsafe situations and feel safe in school. In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils showed that they were clearly aware of the dangers of electricity. They behave well and fulfil a wide range of school responsibilities enthusiastically and conscientiously, for example as prefects. Pupils distribute harvest gifts to the elderly, sing at Luton Airport and contribute to a wide range of charities. Year 5 pupils are working with a local Catholic school in a carnival arts project with a view to taking part in the Luton International Carnival. Pupils of all races develop a common sense of values. Pupils' social skills are promoted well in the breakfast club. Attendance is affected by two days of religious observance. It is average overall.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Staff's very good relationships with the pupils, planning for different needs and the pupils' ready cooperation in lessons create a positive atmosphere for learning which contributes well to the good progress that the pupils make. Effective use of electronic screens helps to maintain a visual approach to learning and keep the pupils' attention. This also helps to develop the pupils' command of English because they associate vocabulary with the visual images. Teaching assistants are deployed well with small groups and individuals, helping pupils who do not find learning easy to understand their work.

The aims of each lesson are shared well with the pupils so that they know the scope of what is being taught and what they are expected to do. Good opportunities for paired discussions keep all pupils involved and also support the development of their speaking and listening skills well. Following such an arrangement in an outstanding music lesson, pupils had to convey the ideas of the person they had been sharing their thoughts with rather than giving their own. Marking is generally good but in some instances it does not provide pupils with specific targets about how they can improve their work. Approaches to teaching mental mathematics are not yet consistent across the school in promoting strategies to assist their calculations.

Good arrangements are made to provide for pupils who have special educational needs/and or disabilities and pupils with little command of English so that they make similar rates of progress to other pupils. The good use of visits, for example to museums,

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supports the pupils' ongoing studies, as do visitors to the school who have specific knowledge, such as authors. Good attention is given to providing for pupils who have particular talents and abilities, and the very wide range of extra-curricular activities provides well for different pupils' interests and skills. The pupils' participation in sport contributes well to their healthy lifestyles and this aspect is recognised in the National Healthy School Status. Music and sport, in which the school gains considerable success, are particular strengths among a wide range of opportunities the pupils experience in the day-to-day curriculum. Literacy and numeracy are used well in other subjects but computers are not always used effectively to support learning in different subjects.

Staff take good care of the pupils, who in turn are confident that any concerns they raise will be dealt with effectively. Transition arrangements into the school, between classes and on transfer to the secondary school are well managed and ensure that the pupils settle quickly. Good first-aid arrangements, thorough risk assessments and good attention to health and safety matters, ensure that the pupils have a safe environment in which to work. Family workers play an effective role in liaising with parents and carers who need extra support so that problems can be resolved in their children's best interests. The breakfast club provides a good and caring environment. The school provides well for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, for example through nurture group activities, and ensures that they are monitored carefully.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Successful school development planning identifies clear priorities to improve teaching and learning further. The headteacher is pivotal in the cohesion of the senior leadership team and the staff. The vision and drive of the senior leadership team is shared by staff and the governing body, all of whom play an active part in improvement planning. The good distribution of responsibilities and staff's regular monitoring of teaching and learning help to secure improvement and embed ambition. The school knows its pupils and the progress they are making very well through regular tracking.

The governing body has a good knowledge of the school because governors visit frequently. It is fully involved in monitoring the impact of the actions taken on school priorities and in the analysis of pupils' progress, and holds the school to account effectively. Its financial oversight is good, and its arrangements for managing the breakfast club are well considered. Safeguarding arrangements are secure and child protection matters given good attention. Staff are kept up to date in these matters. Risk assessments are very thorough.

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Links with parents and carers are good and their views fully considered. Communication is good, and written communication is made accessible through translation into different community languages. Work is underway to improve communication even further. For example, parents and carers do not yet have a good enough grasp of the calculation methods the school uses in mathematics in order to support their children at home. Partnerships with other professionals ensure that pupils get the help that they need. Links with community groups and other settings, for example the Family Centre, help to support whole families well. The school gives good attention to equality of opportunity and tracks the progress of different groups rigorously. The school's good community cohesion plan is driving forward links locally and globally, as recognised in its preliminary International Award. The school has a link with a rural school, a local Catholic Junior School and also links with the Indian sub-continent. The school was recently featured on a popular BBC programme for one of the local community projects in which it was involved.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The percentage of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was much higher than is usually found. A large majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school in many aspects of its work and express very favourable views. A small percentage feel that their children do not make enough progress, that pupils' behaviour is not dealt with well enough, or that the school does not give enough attention to their views. The inspection team judged that pupils make good progress in many aspects of their work, but mathematics, spelling and handwriting are not as good as other aspects of their key skills. The pupils make very good progress in their acquisition of English. Behaviour is managed well. The school issues regular questionnaires to parents and carers, and takes their responses very seriously. It has held some evenings for parents and carers to support the part that they can play in their children's learning but recognises that these events need to



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be extended so that parents and carers can play even more of a part in their children's learning.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at William Austin Junior 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 328 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 570 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	151	46	170	52	4	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	130	40	189	58	6	2	1	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	103	31	210	64	11	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	89	27	208	63	26	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	120	37	202	62	3	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	98	30	205	63	21	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	92	28	215	66	15	5	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)	91	28	211	64	16	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	83	25	223	68	16	5	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	106	32	193	59	27	8	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	69	21	224	68	16	5	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	109	33	208	63	4	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	121	37	198	60	5	2	1	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and 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 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



16 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of William Austin Junior School, LU3 1UA**

Thank you for your help when we visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and learning about what you do. We found you to be very polite and helpful, and you all get along so well together. You concentrate well in your lessons and enjoy school. You clearly enjoy the extra opportunities provided for you after school and we noticed how active you were at playtimes. I am sorry that we did not have time to join you in the games of cricket which you were obviously enjoying so much. You make good progress in learning the English language and also more generally in your work. Your parents and carers think that you attend a good school and we agree with them. The staff work hard on your behalf because they want you to do well. They also take good care of you.

Although we found many aspects of the school to be good, including the range of learning opportunities each day, there are some things that can be improved. We noticed that your progress in mathematics is not as good as it is in English and we have asked the staff to help you make even better progress in this aspect of your work. We also found that in English your handwriting and spelling could be improved. We have asked the school to help you to get better with this part of your learning. You can help by learning your tables, writing neatly and learning families of words that share the same spelling rule.

Thank you once again for your help. We wish you well for the future and hope that you will carry on working as hard as you can and always do your very best.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sudworth

Lead inspector

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