

Wansdyke Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126267
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	364003
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2011
Reporting inspector	David Carrington

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Shah
Headteacher	Charlotte Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons led by 10 teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school planning, assessment data, pupils' work, the school's checks on the quality of teaching and a number of policy documents. The team received 93 questionnaires from parents and carers and also evaluated those from pupils and the school staff.

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

- The extent to which the school has improved provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Whether the quality of provision and pupils' learning is equally effective in Key Stage 1 and 2.
- How far pupils' achievement in writing has been increased.
- The degree to which the promotion of community cohesion extends beyond the local area. The degree to which the promotion of community cohesion extends beyond the local area.

Information about the school

Wansdyke Community is an average sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British families and very few speak English as an additional language. The total proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. However, the school hosts two specialist learning classes and so the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is above average. These pupils have complex learning needs. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible to free school meals is average.

The school has been awarded Healthy Schools and Green Flag Eco-school status.

There has been a significant change of staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher, since the previous inspection. Additionally, the governing body has been restructured during this time and has a new Chair.

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

1

Main findings

Wansdyke Community is a good school. Pupils' achievement dipped in 2008, but after some significant changes of staff it has made brisk improvement. There are many outstanding features and there is steadfast drive and ambition to make the school one of the best. School self-evaluation pinpoints key strengths and weaknesses promptly and accurately, development planning is firmly focused on the leading priorities for improvement and there is excellent strategic management that is highly successful in taking the school forward. This is shown clearly, for example, in the improved promotion of community cohesion which involves well-founded partnerships with a wide range of groups across the world. There is outstanding capacity to maintain the school's rise.

Inspection judgments show a range of grades from a very small minority which are satisfactory to just under a half that are outstanding. School leaders recognise there are two main areas for improvement to enable the school to move to outstanding.

Firstly, provision and children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory, which is less positive than in the rest of the school. The new leader of this phase has already made a strong start and observations in the Reception class show many good features. Work to ensure children have ample opportunity to choose, plan and review their own learning activities is developing well as a result of strengths in the new leadership and management. However, the changed emphasis on this has not had time to have full impact.

Secondly, the curriculum, whilst good, is not yet focused consistently on the development of investigative and creative skills across all subjects and this restricts some aspects of pupils' learning. There are considerable merits in the curriculum, including the very effective emphasis on personal, social and health education which results in pupils' outstanding awareness of health and safety and their great contribution to the school and local communities. It also is at the heart of behaviour management which is positive, being encouraging and rewards led. Thus, behaviour is impeccable and bullying is extremely rare. The fully developed partnerships with other schools, the local authority and outside agencies contribute strongly to the broadening of the curriculum and also to the outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils. This enables pupils with any form of barrier to learning to succeed in their work. The staff of the two specialist learning classes are outstandingly effective in creating a warm, welcoming ethos where the pupils flourish.

Because the quality of teaching has improved substantially during the period since the previous inspection, learning is good and pupils' enjoyment of lessons is high. The quality of provision is now more uniformly effective through Key Stage 1 and 2. Pupils' progress is good, with some significant spurts in some years. Attainment is above average and

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continues to rise, as seen in pupils' writing, where many examples are fluent, expressive and extremely well presented.

The governing body consists of highly qualified and experienced people who have a talent for the supportive probing of the school's performance. Although some are new to the governing body, they show the same drive and ambition as everyone else to move the school to outstanding. Staff, the governing body, pupils and the vast majority of parents and carers recognise that the keystone of the school's march to excellence is the headteacher, who holds high expectations, enthusiastically embraces very challenging targets and encourages the vital energy, motivation and commitment necessary to make the pupils' education even better.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen children's opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage to play a part in managing their own learning by making personal choices of activities, planning how they will manage them and reviewing their successes and difficulties in learning.
- Broaden the focus of all subjects on investigative and creative skills so that pupils make even brisker progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

After the inspection in January 2008, pupils' achievements dipped below their historic good levels. Since 2009, because school self-evaluation was rigorous, corrective measures were put in place and these proved very successful in returning pupils' progress and attainment to their earlier levels. Although there are signs of a recent rise in children's skills and experience when they first enter Reception, they have been below what is expected of this age group over a period of years.

Attainment is above average in writing, with pupils achieving well. This is seen in Year 3 work following the pupils' dramatisation of an ancient Egyptian funeral. 'Even though I'm not family, tears rolled down my cheeks' and 'Whilst I pushed the stone in, I felt nervous. What would happen to ME!' demonstrate clearly the pupils' empathy with personal situations and reflection on their significance. Such writing is a central element of pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attainment is also above average in reading and mathematics. Pupils' achievement in reading is high. It is good in mathematics, for example, as shown when Year 1 estimated with considerable accuracy how many jars it would take to fill a bowl with water. Their skill in pouring the water meant very little spillage!

The successes of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very apparent, both within the specialist provision and the mainstream school. They make good progress because their learning is carefully structured into small step-by-step increases in difficulty. The higher attaining pupils are challenged well by their work in most lessons, although there are a few occasions when their work is a little too leisurely or similar to that of the other ability groups. The school has responded by setting even more stringent targets for learning, which the pupils are working hard to achieve.

The pupils are firm advocates of their school, proud of their own achievement and that of others, and keen to help and support each other. Their high levels of attendance are an

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indication of their thorough enjoyment of school. When questioned, nearly all pupils said they felt particularly safe, well aware of how to stay healthy and really well prepared for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

The general quality of lessons is good, as shown by direct observations and the scrutiny of pupils' books. There are outstanding lessons where pupils frequently make outstanding progress and achieve particularly well. However, there is some remaining inconsistency, although senior leaders are tackling this effectively. Lesson planning is thorough, with firm focus on the needs of pupils in different ability groups. The key learning objectives are rightly almost always related to the skills and knowledge to be gained rather than the activities to be completed. There are some good opportunities for pupils to review their learning as the session progresses, although this is not always fully developed in a few lessons and this tends to slow progress.

Assessment is used well to support learning. Teachers know how well the pupils are achieving and what is necessary to move them on. This knowledge influences planning effectively. The marking of pupils' books is thorough and helpful. It is better in some classes than others, with the pinnacle of effectiveness in Year 6. In this year group, pupils self-assess and also evaluate the work of others. There is an enthusiastic dialogue

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between the teacher and the individual pupil, with a commitment to improve shown clearly by the pupil.

The curriculum is well supported by the good range and impact of the out-of-school activities. Parents, carers and teaching assistants all make an important contribution to the effectiveness of these sessions. Many of the themes followed enthuse the pupils to enquiry, research and investigate, and to work creatively.

The care, guidance and support offered pupils are assets in their academic and personal development. Teaching assistants provide strong and effective support, which is based on thorough knowledge of their pupils' interests, worries or needs. The specialist learning staff show the same unwavering focus on supporting and assisting first-class learning that leads to pupils' effective systematic progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Wansdyke Community School is led and managed with high levels of very effective leadership skills across all aspects of its work. Staff and the governing body unhesitatingly adopt very ambitious targets and tight deadlines for the completion of priorities. These are being achieved with increasing success, resulting in rapidly rising standards and progress. The drive and ambition to provide the very best education for pupils in the specialist learning classes is representative of the approach to improvement across the school.

The governing body is resolute in meeting all its statutory duties. It ensures that the safeguarding of pupils is good. Any cause for concern is followed up rapidly and completely and policy and practise are well versed in the latest guidance. Similarly, it works effectively to promote community cohesion. Staff already know that some aspects of this can be enhanced, such as developing further links with different groups across the United Kingdom. The partnerships with parents and carers are good and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

The school uses its resources well in providing a good education for the pupils. The accommodation has been remodelled extensively since the previous inspection and now serves the needs of the pupils much more effectively than in 2008. The equality of opportunity is good, as measured by the improving achievement of all pupils. There is absolutely no tolerance of any form of discrimination. On the contrary, pupils go out of their way to work and play harmoniously with others. The morning 'Wake and Shake' sessions are a classic example of how pupils help each other and benefit from shared experiences regardless of background or need. This opening session sets the excellent

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tone for the rest of the day and is fully representative of the hardworking yet enjoyable learning ethos created in school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is fast creating improved provision and outcomes. The starting points of children are now higher than in the past and are around those expected. Leadership has changed recently and is already building on the advances made earlier in the school year. However, the school identifies some aspects for further development, including more effective partnerships with parents and carers, more comprehensive assessment of children's skills across the six areas of learning, and centrally, the development of far more opportunities for children to develop responsibility for their own learning through choosing and planning their activities and then reviewing how well they have done. These core priorities have been at the heart of improvement work this year and are bearing fruit in terms of children's accelerating progress and attainment, which, over the year, have been at the expected levels.

The children are enjoying their learning. There is much fun and laughter. They are keen to show visitors what they have achieved, such as the wall of shells embedded in sand, completed as part of their beach theme. Opportunities to write and use numbers are in greater evidence across all the activities, indoors and out. Children are increasingly choosing voluntarily to write and count rather than always learning to do these things under the direction of the teacher. This was apparent in the labels attached to objects in the beach shop, many of which were written and priced by the children.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

About 40% of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is an above average return. Most hold very positive views of the school. There were a number of written comments, split between those in favour of the school and its work and some with significant reservations. The concerns of a small group centred on how effectively the school has improved in the last two years and the quality of leadership. The management of staff changes was also a focus of the concerns. Inspection evidence contrasts strongly with such views. Inspectors assure the parents and carers who hold these views that the changes have been well thought through and are proving very effective in building a reliable, successful education for all pupils. The positive views of parents and carers, which tended to be directly opposed to the concerns, echo these judgements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wansdyke Community 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 93 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 236 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	40	54	58	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	45	45	48	6	6	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	22	59	63	11	12	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	26	55	59	7	8	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	27	29	54	58	5	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	28	52	56	12	13	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	30	62	67	3	3	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)	35	38	50	54	5	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	26	57	61	11	12	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	18	62	67	10	11	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	19	55	59	15	16	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	28	30	50	54	6	6	5	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	32	57	58	4	4	1	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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">■ 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.



17 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wansdyke Community School, Devizes SN10 5EF

Thank you for your friendly welcome when we visited your school recently. You were very helpful and we learned a lot about Wansdyke when we spoke with you. We judge that you go to a good school. In our report, we have written about how it is improving rapidly. Amongst its many strengths, these stand out.

- You are making good progress and doing better than is expected for your age. Your written work is particularly good.
- Children in Reception are enjoying their learning.
- You work and play really well together. The 'Wake and Shake' sessions are a great start to the day.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You are well taught.
- All the adults in school take great care of you.
- Your headteacher leads the staff in expecting great things from you. You work hard to meet these expectations.

We have identified two main things to improve now:

- give Reception children more chances to choose their own activities, plan how they will do them and, afterwards, think about how successful they have been
- make sure you have many opportunities to research, investigate and work creatively in all subjects.

You can help your teachers make these improvements by suggesting some topics to learn about and researching them in books and by computer.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington

Lead inspector

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