

# The Martin Wilson School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	123447
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380655
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 April 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Driscoll

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	196
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Wright
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Purslow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	New Park Road Castlefields Shrewsbury SY1 2SP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01743 236520
<b>Fax number</b>	01743 245737
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	23–24 April 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380655



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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Driscoll

Additional Inspector

Lynne Bradbury

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed the teaching in 18 lessons. A total of eight teachers were observed teaching. Inspectors held meetings with parents and carers, pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation, behaviour records and results of the school's checks on the quality of teaching. Inspectors analysed the responses of pupils and 30 parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire.

## Information about the school

The Martin Wilson School is smaller than most primary schools. The number of pupils has risen since the previous inspection, as a private nursery on the school site is no longer accepting new entrants and they are instead joining the school's Nursery. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has increased significantly and now stands at around 40%. Around 13% of pupils are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. The school uses the services of a pupil referral unit to reintegrate pupils who have joined after being excluded from other schools. Around 90% of the pupils are of White British heritage. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has experienced considerable disruption to staffing since the previous inspection. A new headteacher was appointed in 2009.

The school shares its site with Bluebell Childcare. 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>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because the school’s leaders have not ensured that teaching has improved enough across the school to help pupils make consistently good progress. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress in other years is satisfactory, but varies between year groups and subjects, particularly in Key Stage 2. Attainment on leaving Year 6 is improving and is now average.
- The quality of teaching is improving, but there is still too much variation between year groups and subjects. Older pupils are taught in sets, where they are grouped according to their ability. This has raised teachers’ expectations, but pupils are sometimes given the same writing and mathematics tasks regardless of their ability. Reading tasks are matched well to pupils’ needs. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to practise their reading across the school, but few opportunities to write at length.
- Pupils work hard and concentrate well in lessons. They demonstrate good levels of independence and collaborative skills when teachers encourage them to do so, but this does not happen frequently enough. The school has an outstanding record of reintegrating pupils who have previously been excluded from other schools. Pupils feel very safe in school.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school gathers comprehensive data on pupils’ progress. This information is not used effectively to determine why some classes make faster progress than others and improve the quality of teaching. The written feedback for teachers from such checks is not sufficiently detailed. The school has forged outstanding links with parents and carers. They have a real partnership with the school and are playing a

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significant role in helping it to improve.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress to ensure that it is consistently good by June 2013 by:
  - matching work more closely to pupils' abilities, especially in writing and mathematics sets in Key Stage 2
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to work independently and collaboratively
  - ensuring pupils have greater opportunities to write at length in subjects other than English.
- Ensure that teaching is of a consistently good quality by June 2013 by:
  - using the analyses of progress data to target checks on teaching in order to identify and tackle the key reasons for pupils' slower progress in some subjects and year groups
  - providing more detailed written feedback for teachers so that they are clear about what aspects of teaching are in need of improvement.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' progress over time is satisfactory, and this was also true of the learning typically observed in lessons. Children join the Nursery with knowledge, skills and understanding that are well below the levels expected for their age. They make steady progress in the Nursery, but rapid progress in the Reception class so attainment is close to average by the time they start Year 1. The vast majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire agree that pupils make good progress. Inspectors found that while pupils make good or even outstanding progress in some lessons and year groups, the benefits are offset by slower progress in others. Progress is better in Years 2 and 6 than in Years 1 and 5, for example, and in reading compared to writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, the legacy of past underachievement is being overcome. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has improved rapidly and is now average, including in reading. Attainment in Year 6 has been slower to improve. It is currently average in reading, writing and mathematics, although more pupils are reaching or exceeding the nationally expected level in reading than they are in writing and mathematics. The gap in achievement between pupils eligible for free school meals and others in mathematics that was evident last year has been closed. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well in Key Stage 2 and make good progress. Teaching assistants have received good quality training, know their charges well and are persistent in making them work hard and think for themselves. Such pupils' progress is slightly slower in Key

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Stage 1, because the amount of targeted support they receive is reduced too quickly when they move into Year 2.

Good learning was observed in reading. Pupils enjoyed the books they had chosen and most were keen to tell inspectors about them. They were quick to re-read words they had mispronounced and work out what the word really said. The learning observed in mathematics and writing was satisfactory. Pupils usually worked equally as hard as in their reading lessons, but the least able sometimes found tasks too difficult, while the most able were not always moved on quickly enough. Pupils enjoyed tackling problems and were persistent when trying to reach an answer.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. An increasing proportion of lessons are of good or even outstanding quality, which is reflected in the positive views of most parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. However, outside of the Early Years Foundation Stage there is not enough to bring about consistently good progress. The start of the day is a strong feature of teaching and the curriculum. Pupils get straight down to work the moment they arrive in class as teachers have tasks ready and waiting for them. This sets the tone for the day and gets pupils into a good frame of mind to learn.

The recent move to teaching pupils in sets at Key Stage 2 has raised teachers' expectations. However, in writing and mathematics the same task is often given to all pupils in a set, regardless of their ability. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make better progress than others in these circumstances, because the teaching assistant explains and adapts the tasks to meet their specific needs. Other pupils sometimes find the work too difficult, or are not moved on when they have clearly grasped a new concept.

In all year groups, pupils learn best when they are given the freedom to get on with tasks by themselves and work with other pupils. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, for example, children made good gains in knowledge, skills and understanding in lessons where the teachers provided a stimulus and then allowed children to explore topics for themselves, choosing their own resources. The pirate ship was particularly popular and allowed children to build their own fantasy world, talking about where they would sail to and how pirates speak. In other year groups, and in teacher-led sessions in the Nursery, the teacher sometimes dominates proceedings and this stifles pupils' independence. This is rarely the case in reading lessons, where pupils are moved quickly to tasks such as researching peanut production. Teachers match these tasks closely to different abilities, and ensure pupils can tackle them on their own initiative and discuss their findings with each other. Marking is thorough and pupils are clear about their targets, although teachers do not always ensure that corrections are carried out.

Pupils are taught new vocabulary consistently well. Teachers emphasise new words in topics and ensure that pupils know what they mean and how to use them in

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sentences. In subjects other than English there is a preponderance of worksheets that only demand short answers from pupils and do not allow them to practise and extend their writing skills.

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

Parents, carers and pupils all confirm that behaviour is good and that pupils feel very safe in school. Behaviour is consistently good, both in and out of lessons. The school's own records show few serious incidents and the number of fixed-term exclusions is now below average. There have been no permanent exclusions since the school was last inspected. A simple set of rules is understood well and adhered to by all pupils. Staff implement the behaviour policy consistently, although it is rarely needed. No parent, carer or pupil raised any concern at all about bullying of any kind. There has been one reported case in the past year of a pupil being unpleasant to another, but this was cleared up in two days and has not recurred. Pupils are keen to get down to work and respond well to their teachers, rarely needing a reminder to concentrate.

The school has admitted several pupils who have been previously excluded from other schools. Staff work exceptionally well with the pupil referral unit to make arrangements for gradual reintroduction to mainstream schooling, ensuring that pupils have friendship groups, adults to talk to and a comprehensive support package. The results are outstanding. None of the pupils have been excluded while at The Martin Wilson School and some individual pupils who have been 'school refusers' in the past have 100% attendance records. The school's overall attendance is average, but improving each year.

### **Leadership and management**

The staff are fully behind the headteacher's drive to improve the school. Behaviour has shown good improvement since the previous inspection, as a result of the simplified procedures that have been introduced. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements in full. Improvement in achievement and teaching has been satisfactory. Checks on teaching are frequent and provide a broad overview of its quality. The written feedback provided for teachers is clear on what worked well, but areas for improvement are relatively few and not as detailed. Those that are identified are addressed well through specific training. The school holds comprehensive information about pupils' achievement, but does not use it to target lesson observations to find out why progress is slower in one year group than another. Senior leaders, including members of the governing body, have set appropriate priorities for development but the expected impact on pupils' achievement is not always clear, and this limits their ability to accurately evaluate the success of initiatives. The school has received significant support from the local authority to ensure that it has developed satisfactory capability for sustained improvement.

Senior leaders ensure that the school promotes equality and tackles discrimination

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satisfactorily through a broad and balanced curriculum. The gaps in progress between different groups have been closed, although there are still variations between classes. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Classrooms and corridors contain many displays of high-quality, thought-provoking artwork. Pupils visit places of worship to learn about different faiths and there are many visitors to the school from other cultures. Good links are maintained with schools in other countries. The curriculum is enriched by a good number of trips, but pupils have too few opportunities to write at length in different subjects.

The school's engagement with parents and carers is outstanding. The parents' council is not just consulted about improvements, but is active in implementing them. For example, some parents and carers had concerns about homework. They worked on policies and procedures, designed a new homework diary, found a provider, implemented the new approach and have monitored its success. The very popular classes for parents and carers on reading and mathematics have helped them to understand how they can support their child's learning at home to best effect. The result is that parents and carers feel that they are valued partners, and are positive about all that the school provides.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.**



25 April 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of The Martin Wilson School, Shrewsbury, SY1 2SP**

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. You, your parents and carers and all the staff can be proud of your good behaviour and how polite you are.

You go to a satisfactory school that is improving. You make steady progress and leave school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are similar to pupils in most other schools. You told us that you like working in the new groups in Years 5 and 6 because the work is harder. We agree, but some of you still find it a bit too hard or too easy. You concentrate and work hard in lessons. You make good progress when you work on your own or in small groups. We have asked your teachers to let you do this more often, and to make sure that you are always given work that is just hard enough for you. You are learning to read well and have many opportunities to read in different subjects. We have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to practise your writing so that you can make better progress. You can help by always writing as much as you possibly can.

Your headteacher has made sure that all the staff are working together to make the school a better place. Your parents and carers are very happy with the school, because they are encouraged to play a full part in helping it to improve. The headteacher and senior staff know how well you are doing in each of your classes and subjects. They know that you do better in some than in others, but do not always find out why. We have asked them to check lessons where your progress is slower to find out what could be improved, and to tell teachers in more detail how lessons could be even better.

With all best wishes for your future lives.

Yours faithfully

David Driscoll  
Lead inspector

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