



Watling Street Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104202
LEA Walsall
Inspection number 277098
Inspection dates 6 March 2006 to 7 March 2006
Reporting inspector Faysal Mikdadi Al

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Watling Street
School category	Community		Walsall
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Midlands WS8 7LW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01543 452320
Number on roll	210	Fax number	01543 370381
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Nick Baddeley
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2000	Headteacher	Miss J Monckton

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Watling Street Primary School is a small school in the Brownhills area of Walsall. Most pupils come from the local neighbourhood, which has some areas of deprivation. Pupils come from White British backgrounds. A small number of pupils have a variety of learning difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry is low. Almost the entire teaching staff have been appointed since the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that it provides outstanding education because pupils make excellent progress and achieve high standards. The main causes for this are the excellent leadership, outstanding teaching, excellent care for the pupils and the outstanding curriculum. All of these mean that pupils are happy and safe and that they enjoy being at school. The school gives outstanding value for money. Pupils made a specific point of telling inspectors how proud they were of their school. The headteacher carries out rigorous monitoring of all aspects of provision. She and her colleagues use the results of this monitoring to maintain the very good improvements made since the last inspection. Teachers plan their lessons effectively and match tasks to the pupils' differing abilities. Pupils respond positively to the outstanding teaching and they work with considerable independence to make excellent progress. The curriculum offered is excellent in helping pupils to achieve as well as they can. Their personal development is outstanding, with the result that they behave in an exemplary manner. Children in the Nursery and in the Reception classes make excellent progress in their social and independent working skills so that pupils' standards are in line with expectations by the time that they start Year 1. These improvements set the trend that continues throughout their school life. The school's results make it the top-performing school in the area and place it amongst the topperforming one per cent of schools in England. The school has an outstanding capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no major areas for improvements in this outstanding school. However, the school should work to improve provision for the pupils' cultural development in order to bring it up to the excellence achieved in other areas of the school's work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement and standards are outstanding overall. When the children come into school their attainment is low. Many joining the Nursery class lacking the independent social skills needed at school. Because of the excellent support that they receive, coupled with consistent encouragement, they make very quick progress and they soon display independent skills in many of their social interactions as well as in their learning. By the time that these pupils join Year 1 their standards are in line with national expectations. When they go on to Year 1 they continue to make the same speedy progress, so that by the end of Year 2 their results reach the national average. By the end of Year 6, test results are well above the national average. Given the low attainment on entry and given the high standards by the time that the pupils are ready to move on to their senior school, their progress is outstanding. The main reasons for this outstanding progress are the consistently high quality provision in teaching, the curriculum, care, guidance and support. The school has placed a strong focus on monitoring individual pupils' progress and using any information from this monitoring

to set challenging targets, which the pupils consistently meet. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities also make outstanding progress because of the excellent provision made.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are polite, welcoming and exceptionally well behaved. Their very positive attitudes and above-average attendance show how much they enjoy coming to school. They respond very well to the teachers' high expectations and encouragement, which celebrate their achievements. Pupils' social and moral development is outstanding. Pupils work well together and help one another both in class and in the playground. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility and act independently in an excellent range of activities, which make a very positive contribution to the school and local community. The school council is well established and there are many examples of its contribution to improving the school, such as deciding on equipment for the school grounds. Pupils plan and implement fundraising activities to raise substantial sums of money for charity. This effective development of personal and social skills and the school's emphasis on learning basic skills mean that pupils are very well equipped for their future lives. Spiritual development is good because pupils respond well to time made for reflection both in assembly and circle time. They also benefit from the good opportunities available for cultural development in religious education and special events, although some aspects of the school's work in this area would benefit from further improvement. Pupils have excellent awareness of how to be safe. They acquire a comprehensive understanding about how to stay fit and healthy by virtue of the school's full range of sporting activities and emphasis on healthy eating.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding and make a major contribution to the pupils' outstanding progress. Teachers know their pupils well and they are therefore able to plan lessons that match the pupils' various abilities whilst challenging them to excel even further. All teachers carry out high quality planning which ensures that challenging tasks are set for all pupils. These tasks are also varied in order to ensure that each pupil's prior attainment is taken into account. The result is that every pupil responds positively to carrying out tasks set. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were working on how to write complex sentences. Because of the way that the teacher prompted them, encouraged them to take risks and kept pushing them to make their sentences more and more complex, every pupil in the group was able to produce an excellent opening to a spooky story. Their use of language brought the stories to life. It is easy to understand why pupils speak so highly of their teachers. Each lesson finishes with a plenary that includes an opportunity for the pupils to evaluate what they had learnt

during the lesson and what they need to do next in order to improve further. These qualities, coupled with the children's exemplary behaviour, clear understanding of expected routines, the teaching assistants' excellent support and the pupils' highly developed independent learning skills, mean that the children really enjoy their learning and constantly strive for success. Assessment strategies are rigorous and pupils are told exactly what they need to do to improve their work even further. Foundation Stage children are successfully encouraged to be independent and they are constantly challenged to do well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. The work planned for pupils matches precisely their needs and interests. It is very well planned and meets statutory requirements. The strong focus on literacy across the school has contributed significantly to improved standards. The activities provided present a very good balance of opportunities to develop basic skills and those to develop creative skills and increase pupils' understanding of the world around them. Health and fitness are well promoted by the wide range of sporting activities provided each week. Personal, social and health education is taught to all age groups through a well-planned programme. There are strong curriculum links with the nearby secondary school which further enhance the breadth of subjects on offer in modern foreign languages, sport and arts subjects. There is a very good range of well-attended after-school clubs and activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils have a very considerable bearing on their well-being, their progress and personal development. Very secure child protection procedures and those to protect vulnerable children are in place and are clearly understood by staff. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure and that their views are listened to and respected. They have full confidence in staff to deal with the very few incidents of bullying or racism which are reported in school. Older pupils care well for younger ones through schemes like the buddy system, which is very well valued by pupils. The school's effective health and safety procedures are properly underpinned by risk assessments, enabling pupils to take part in a wide range of activities both on and off the school's site. There is a high level of support and supervision from staff at playtimes. The system to track whether pupils' progress is on target is very effective in letting teachers, pupils and parents know what they need to work on and how to improve. Pupils who may underachieve and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are exceptionally well supported to achieve well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is determined that nothing less than the very best is provided in the school. She is supported in this exceptionally high expectation by a skilled, hard-working and empowered group of teachers, teaching assistants and other staff. Everyone in the school is agreed on what needs to be done and how it should be done. The result has been consistently outstanding provision, which constantly strives to do better. The good governing body is fully supportive of the headteacher and her colleagues. They have a high profile in the school and they know its strengths and weaknesses, which enables them to play a full part in helping the school move forward. The excellent provision means that the school provides outstanding value for money. The school has excellent systems to check how well it is doing. It accurately analyses its performance to find all strengths and weaknesses. As a result of rigorous monitoring by senior leaders and middle managers, the school keeps the pace of improvement going such that pupils consistently make excellent progress. The focus started in the Nursery of making sure that the children learn to be independent and to work well with each other continues throughout the school such that pupils display remarkable independence in their learning and show considerable maturity in their exemplary behaviour. Parents speak very highly of what the school is doing with their children. They hold the headteacher in very high regard. They are fully supportive of the school's work. The school has excellent capacity for continued improvements.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Pupils Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome in your school during our recent visit. We enjoyed meeting everyone at Watling Street Primary. It was wonderful to see so many of you going up to collect prizes, cups, certificates and badges for all the excellent things that you had done. I am writing to tell you what we thought of your school. During our visit you told us that you liked coming to school. You said that you were proud of your school. We fully understand what you mean because we think that your school is an excellent school. Here are some of the reasons why it is excellent: • You have made excellent progress since you started school. • Your behaviour around the school is excellent. • All the adults in the school work extremely hard to give you the very best education possible. • The headteacher is excellent at making sure that everything that happens in the school is checked carefully so that things continue to be excellent. • You are superbly well cared for so that you are safe, happy and interested in everything that you do. Watling Street Primary is such an excellent school that we have asked all the adults who work with you to make sure that they keep giving you every chance to do so well. We have also suggested that the school should work on improving cultural provision to make it as outstanding as everything else in the school. Once again, thank you for your really lovely hospitality. We wish you the very best for your continued success. Yours sincerely, Dr F H Mikdadi Lead inspector