



Wilkinson Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104325
LEA Wolverhampton
Inspection number 277131
Inspection dates 21 March 2006 to 22 March 2006
Reporting inspector Christine Field AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Walter Road
School category	Community		Bradley
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Bilston, West Midlands WV14 8UR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 558971
Number on roll	343	Fax number	01902 558972
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Councillor T H Turner
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Christina Gibbon

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is located in the Bradley area of Bilston, a suburb of Wolverhampton with relatively high levels of unemployment that are reflected in the above- average number of pupils who take up free school meals. The school is larger than most, with 344 pupils from three to eleven years on roll. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with around a tenth from other minority ethnic groups. No pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties. When pupils start school in the nursery, their skills and knowledge are well below levels expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wilkinson Primary School provides a good education for its pupils and the school's own evaluation agrees. Pupils are generally well taught, learn successfully and achieve good standards by the end of Year 6. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage have many positive qualities. However, the pace and challenge in some lessons in Years 1 and 2 could be better as the presentation of work in some pupils' books lacks care.

Pupils develop very well into kind and thoughtful young people. They benefit from an outstanding programme of visits and activities and feel safe and secure because the school provides excellent pastoral care. The use of personal targets is developing well. However, pupils have too few opportunities to review their targets and teachers' marking does not make enough use of them to guide pupils' next steps in learning.

The highly effective leadership of the headteacher has been instrumental in moving the school forward since its last inspection. Strong teamwork ensures that pupils are helped to build a wide range of skills that prepare them well for future citizenship. Senior leaders know how well the school is doing and deploy resources efficiently and effectively. Middle managers are developing their monitoring roles well. School improvement works well, as seen for example, in the improved standards in writing in pupils' books. However, the school improvement plan does not include specific or measurable criteria that could help governors monitor the school's work more rigorously.

The school consults pupils and parents well on a regular basis about the quality of provision and has rightly identified the pressing need to develop its library and the outdoor provision for the youngest learners as key priorities. The school has good capacity to continue to improve and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure pupils are set work at the right level of challenge and that they improve presentation, particularly in Years 1 and 2
- Make better use of pupils' targets in marking and allow pupils to review how well they are doing with their teacher on a regular basis
- Refine the school plan so that it includes specific criteria for measuring the impact of the action taken and helps governors hold the school to account.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. The standards achieved by Year 2 pupils were average in the 2005 national tests and were above average in Year 6. Standards show a rising trend with good value added to pupils' education during their time at school.

When pupils start in the Foundation Stage their standards are well below levels expected. They build literacy and numeracy skills at a good pace and make very good progress in their personal and social development. From these firm foundations, most pupils make steady progress in Years 1 and 2, and good progress thereafter.

Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from tailor-made work programmes that support consistently good progress towards their individual targets. Higher-attaining pupils make particularly good progress in Years 3 to 6 because they are well challenged but in Years 1 and 2, challenge is inconsistent so they make slower progress.

The school recognises that pupils' individual targets require closer tracking. Targets agreed with the local authority for the current Year 6 are realistic and pupils are on track to meet them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral and social development, is good. Cultural development is satisfactory. Behaviour is almost always good. Pupils say that there is occasional misbehaviour but that staff deal with it quickly. The attendance of most pupils is satisfactory.

Pupils develop into responsible and thoughtful young people because of the many positive experiences the school provides that nurture their good self-esteem. This starts in the Nursery where the youngest pupils are helped to build the confidence to 'have a go' at new things, play happily with one another and take turns when asked.

Pupils show outstanding enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning. They told inspectors that they especially appreciate 'the brilliant extra-curricular activities' that enable them to build good team and leadership skills that help prepare them well for the future world of work. They have a very keen sense of social responsibility and a strong voice in decision-making through the work of House Captains and the developing School Council. For example, they have recently spearheaded improvement to the toilets and are very proud of the hygienic and fragrant-smelling soap dispensers! Pupils are well aware of personal health and safety issues and many make sensible choices at lunchtime when they select the healthy option.

Visits to local elderly residents and involvement with Bilston town carnival enable pupils to make a valuable contribution to the local neighbourhood.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, with excellent relationships resulting in pupils being eager to take part in lessons. The whole-school focus on improving reading and writing is proving successful, as shown in the rising standards. Pupils with learning difficulties receive good support from very skilled teaching assistants and this is a key factor in helping these pupils to learn successfully. Pupils learn at a good pace in the first two years of school. The teaching team effectively spends time on helping these pupils to build secure social skills and positive learning habits. High expectations, a brisk pace and a good level of challenge ensure that pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn particularly

successfully. However, a few lessons in Years 1 and 2, whilst satisfactory, are not stimulating enough to challenge the higher-attaining pupils sufficiently.

The use of individual targets to help pupils to focus on moving forward is developing. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to review their targets and evaluate how well they are doing. Teachers' marking, though encouraging, does not always target improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that is supplemented by outstanding opportunities for a well-rounded education through the wide variety of out-of-school clubs, residential visits and visitors to the school, such as Heart FM radio presenters. Pupils benefit significantly from the extensive range of sports on offer and the school is very successful in the competitions entered. Pupils love the 'hands on' activities; older pupils told inspectors, 'I really enjoyed making my model Andersen shelter at home'. The weekly teaching of Spanish to pupils in Years 3 to 6 is much enjoyed. The school is now striving to improve the curriculum even more by using its recently improving information and communication technology resources to provide pupils with further opportunities to develop research skills. Plans to enable a new library and extended outdoor space for pupils in the Foundation Stage to go ahead are well

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Throughout the school, pupils are well cared for and regularly reminded about the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles and staying safe. As a result, their self-esteem is high and they feel safe and have absolute confidence in their teachers. Procedures for child protection are robust and the awareness of all staff is high because they have received very recent training.

A wide range of links is in place to support learners, including fruitful partnerships with the local Sure Start and a number of high schools. Parents greatly appreciate the ways in which staff support their children and give positive encouragement for them to achieve their personal best. Attendance is given high status with the award of certificates and badges for good attendance and punctuality. Despite the school's best efforts a handful of families do not give the school their full support in making sure their children attend regularly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and are reflected in pupils' good academic and social achievement. An outstanding feature of the leadership of the school is the many opportunities it provides for all of its pupils to enjoy and progress in their learning,

free from discrimination. The headteacher has very high expectations and motivates others to give of their best. She has established a clear programme for continual improvement in order to fulfil the shared vision of providing the best possible education for the pupils. Her highly focused leadership, correctly described by the governors as 'visionary', is a significant factor in identifying the strengths and the priorities for improvement. As a result, there has been good progress in the reorganisation of the Foundation Stage, which now enables pupils to receive a flying start to their education. The teamwork at Wilkinson is a significant strength.

The headteacher is supported well by the assistant heads and subject leaders. They have made good contributions to the improvements in the school in the last two years. Senior leaders know the school well and hold accurate views about its effectiveness. They regularly consult with pupils and parents and this enables them to support the daily life and development of the school.

The governing body makes sure that all legal requirements are met and takes great pride in the school's achievements. Although they take regular informal soundings from the local community, they are less certain in their knowledge as to how the school can improve and how its success can be measured. The school plan, as the main tool for guiding improvement, includes a useful analysis of data to help manage change. However, the criteria for measuring success are insufficiently precise.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	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?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

I am writing to tell you just how much the inspectors enjoyed their visit to your school and to thank you for all the help you gave us. I would also like to tell you what we think about your school.

What we liked best

•Your warm welcome. It was a pleasure to visit your school. •You behave sensibly both in class and in the playground. •You work hard and really enjoy your lessons. •Your teachers and teaching assistants try their very best for you and look after you extremely well. •Your headteacher is very good at her job. She listens to what you and everyone involved with Wilkinson has to say and works hard to make changes if they are needed.

What we think the school can do to improve

•Ask teachers to always give you work that stretches you, especially those of you who sometimes find the work too easy, and to use marking to show you ways to improve. •Provide time every few weeks for you to discuss your learning targets with teachers to see how well you are doing and what you need to do next. •Make sure everyone knows what the school is doing to make it even better so that they can all help and keep a check on improvements. •We agree with your teachers that you have a good school. Continue to work hard together and it will continue to improve further. We wish you every success for the future.