



Hindley Green St John's Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 106473
Local Authority Wigan
Inspection number 277571
Inspection dates 24–25 January 2007
Reporting inspector Marie Cordey

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Atherton Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Hindley Green, Wigan
Age range of pupils	4–11		Lancashire WN2 4SD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01942 255396
Number on roll (school)	207	Fax number	01942 253554
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	T Fisher MBE
		Headteacher	Miss Beverley Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2000		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 24–25 January 2007	Inspection number 277571
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a smaller than average Church of England school in a village on the outskirts of Wigan. The building has been extensively refurbished after a fire almost three years ago: there has also been some turnover in staffing. The vast majority of the pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has recently gained the Activemark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. Consequently, it provides poor value for money.

Although children enjoy coming to school they badly underachieve throughout Years 1 to 6 as a result of low expectations and weaknesses in teaching. Achievement and standards have been slowly deteriorating over the past three years particularly in science and mathematics. Although standards in the current Year 6 are broadly average they should be much higher: the pupils are not on course to meet the school's targets in the 2007 national tests. Assessment information is not used consistently and pupils' progress is not checked closely enough. As a result teachers do not know how well the pupils are doing or what needs improving. Good teaching and management in the Foundation Stage mean that pupils' skills improve well but this does not continue throughout the school. Teaching and learning are inadequate overall and not strong enough to improve the pupils' performance.

Pupils are welcoming and polite and, although a significant proportion of parents have some concerns, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance is good and pupils are aware of how to live healthily and safely. The curriculum is inadequate because it does not meet the needs of all the pupils. Too little time is spent on science and foundation subjects and there are few opportunities to use skills in English and mathematics in other areas of the curriculum. In Year 6, however, pupils' use of information and communication technology in a range of subjects effectively improves their computer skills.

The pupils are caring of each other, as demonstrated by the way in which the older pupils look after the younger ones. There are appropriate safeguards to protect the pupils. Support systems for tracking and monitoring progress are not effective and pupils are unsure how they are doing in their work or precisely how to improve their performance. Parents are worried about their children's progress and about not being involved enough in their children's education: inspectors agree that the school does not do enough in this respect.

Leaders have worked hard to manage the building after the fire and to try and keep pupils and parents informed. Various initiatives have been introduced but, because they have not been followed through rigorously enough, they have only been partially successful. Where they have been consistent standards have improved, for example in pupils' writing. However, systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance are unclear and do not involve staff sufficiently. Managers have not been effective in raising standards or ensuring that pupils reach their potential. Whilst they have good ideas and intentions, too little has been done to establish systems that are followed through by the whole school. The quality of self-evaluation is inadequate. Leaders do not monitor or act on the information gained swiftly or robustly enough

to move things forward quickly. Governance is satisfactory: governors are aware of the things that need to be done to improve the school and are now working with new members to involve parents more closely and hold the school to account.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement throughout the school especially in science and mathematics.
- Improve monitoring and evaluation and the use of assessment data to accelerate achievement.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils learn as well as they should, particularly by raising teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve and using teaching assistants more effectively.
- Provide pupils with a curriculum that fully meets their academic needs.
- Involve parents as fully as possible in supporting their children's learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils have not met their targets in recent years. When children start school their skills and knowledge are above those typical for four-year-olds. Although pupils do well in the Foundation Stage, progress slows when pupils join Year 1 so that by the time they reach Year 6 standards are not as high as they should be. Although standards are broadly average pupils' achievement is inadequate. This is particularly the case in science and mathematics and also for some girls. There are too few opportunities for pupils to work together and learn investigative skills in science and how to solve problems in mathematics. Therefore despite standards being broadly average overall, standards are considerably below average in science and slightly below in mathematics. Despite an above-average number of teaching assistants, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not make enough progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage quickly learn to tell right from wrong and become self-reliant. Pupils' attendance has improved and is now good. Most pupils behave satisfactorily and show respect for their teachers and each other. Although pupils generally feel safe in school, some pupils and their parents are concerned about bullying. Inspectors judged that the school deals with bullying adequately. Pupils have begun to take on more responsibilities and relish the increased opportunities to talk to adults and become involved in improving their school. Weaknesses in numeracy and science leave them short of some of the basic skills they need for later life and their future economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. However, the school does not sufficiently promote the pupils' awareness of

the diversity of modern British society. Lessons do not cover this area and resources are limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Pupils do not learn enough because lessons are not planned well enough to meet their needs. Teachers are over-reliant on worksheets and assessment is inconsistent. Teaching assistants are not always effectively deployed to support learning. There are few opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening and they are generally passive in their learning. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is inhibited by the slow pace of some lessons and the lack of opportunities to work independently or collaboratively in groups. These uninspiring lessons often result from teachers' low expectations of what the pupils are capable of and work that is too easy. However, in Reception, lessons are well planned and challenging. The pupils make consistently good progress through being actively involved in their learning, excited by the subject and taught to work with a measure of independence.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum in the Foundation stage provides children with a balance of experiences covering all the required areas of learning. However, in the rest of the school the curriculum is not matched closely enough to the needs of all pupils. There are too few science lessons to cover the requirements of the subject. The overuse of worksheets in lessons reduces pupils' independence and the chance for them to be creative. Parents and their children have appealed for more enrichment through outside visits and visitors to school: inspectors agree that this is too limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Care, guidance and support are inadequate overall. Nonetheless, the school works hard to improve pupils' self-esteem and to provide an environment which is safe and secure. Pupils are well cared for and recent initiatives to improve behaviour have been successful. Risk assessments are carried out regularly. Although there is some effective collaboration of support and teaching staff, insufficient use is made of teaching assistants in helping all pupils achieve as well as they should. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are not good enough, so teachers do not have sufficient information to ensure all pupils make necessary gains.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate. Although the school is keen to improve performance it has not demonstrated the capacity to do so. Pupils' underachievement has not been tackled effectively because systems are inconsistently applied across the school. As a result, strategies for improvement are implemented patchily, monitoring does not evaluate the impact and staff do not know precisely how to raise the pupils' performance. Disruption caused by the fire and changes in staffing have placed a great load on the school and managers have taken their 'eye off the ball' with regards to pupils' achievement. There has been inadequate improvement since the previous inspection. Nonetheless the school provides a welcoming and calm environment and the school is orderly. A significant proportion of parents feel that not enough account is taken of their views: the school is keen to work on this so that parents feel more involved. Governors are involved in the life of the school and are regular visitors.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	4
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for the kind welcome you gave us when we visited your school. You were very polite and thoughtful. We liked the way you care for each other especially those younger than yourselves. You get a good start to your school life in the Reception class because your lessons are good and you really enjoy learning.

We think that your school could be a lot better, so we have decided that your school needs 'special measures' which means that your headteacher will get extra help to make sure that you all do as well as you can. Inspectors will return to make sure that your school is improving.

We have asked those in charge of your school to check how well you are doing and set you clear targets so that you can improve your work, especially in science and mathematics lessons. Your lessons should be planned to allow you to be more active and to take greater responsibility for your own learning. We have also asked that you get the best out of all the subjects you are taught and that your parents are given the advice they need to help you in your learning. You can help by becoming more involved in lessons that will be planned to match what you need to do to improve.

We wish you well in the future.