



# Wath Victoria Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106887  
**LEA** Rotherham  
**Inspection number** 277647  
**Inspection dates** 12 June 2006 to 13 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Joe Peacock CfBT Lead Inspector

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Sandymount Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Wath-upon-Dearne
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Rotherham, South Yorkshire S63 7AD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 760103
<b>Number on roll</b>	256	<b>Fax number</b>	01709 760576
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs C Bennington
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs L Wylam

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12 June 2006 - 13 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277647
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is situated in the small town of Wath-upon-Dearne in a former coal mining area that is recovering from the closure of this local industry. A children's centre attached to the school opened in February 2006. The school is broadly average in size with almost all the pupils coming from a White British background. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are both above average. A significant number of pupils join or leave some year groups throughout the year. The school has an Active Mark Gold Award, Artsmark Gold and Healthy School Awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It gives good value for money. The many strengths identified in the previous inspection have been maintained and others such as curriculum provision, have been successfully developed. Inspection judgements mostly agree with the school's self-evaluation but the personal development of pupils and the quality of the curriculum are judged to be outstanding rather than good. All the issues from the last inspection have been dealt with effectively, including some significant improvement in standards. The school is led extremely well by the headteacher; her enthusiasm and drive give a strong impetus to school improvement. As a result, the capacity to improve further is good.

Pupils make good progress because of the good quality teaching and outstanding curriculum that combine to inspire them to work hard and do their best in lessons. Although children typically attain below average standards by the end of Year 6, this represents good progress from their starting points on entry to Nursery. Most pupils achieve well in all subjects but the school has identified writing as an area for improvement; spelling is a particular weakness throughout the school. An action plan to improve writing skills is already in place but there is insufficient focus on spelling. Standards and the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage are good. The school meets the needs of all its pupils well through the good quality care, support and guidance.

Leadership and management are good, overall. The headteacher is ably supported by key staff who work very well together as a team. Governors are committed to the school and, although doing a sound job, are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring standards and the quality of all aspects of provision.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

In order to build on its many strengths and improve standards further, the school should:

- improve the quality of pupils' writing skills and spelling for all age groups
- ensure that governors have the relevant training to enable them to effectively monitor the quality of provision and standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children's skills when they join the Nursery are varied but, overall, they are well below those expected for their age. The good quality of teaching and support that they receive ensures that about three quarters of them reach the expected standards by the end of their Reception year. They continue to make good progress throughout the school in most subjects.

It is unlikely that the school will be able to maintain in 2006 the broadly average standards attained by Year 6 pupils in 2005. In the current Year 6, there are significantly more pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and many only joined the school in the past two years. Although standards in reading, mathematics and science are expected to be below average, this reflects good progress by pupils in these subjects. Pupils' spelling is a particular weakness throughout the school and is adversely affecting the quality of their writing. As a result, progress in English is slower because standards in writing are not as good as those in reading. A detailed action plan to improve standards in writing has been introduced but it does not place sufficient emphasis on improving spelling. Good use is made of computers, especially those in the computer suite and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are generally in line with those expected. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective and well planned support provided for them.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils enthusiastically join in all aspects of school life and are keen to take on responsibilities. This is evident from the way the school council effectively ensures that pupils have a voice in decision-making and in introducing new initiatives, such as Victoria's Caf., a special lunchtime area giving pupils independence, freedom and responsibility. Playground leaders show a very clear understanding of safety, ensuring that pupils enjoy playtimes.

Attendance was below average in 2005 but has been improved this year and is now broadly average. This is due to thorough monitoring of all absence and rewards to encourage better attendance. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are polite and show positive attitudes in lessons. These aspects support their good achievement. They work well together in groups and there is a strong ethos of caring for and helping others during lessons. This contributes to the positive relationships clearly evident in school. Pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and start each day with 10 minutes of physical exercise. Older pupils run a fruit stall helping them to develop good basic numeracy skills that contribute to their future economic well-being. They raise funds for local causes and for extra resources within school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although more could be done to promote a better understanding of today's multicultural society.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and results in pupils' good progress. There are examples of outstanding teaching in Years 2 and 6. In the well staffed and

resourced Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching is good as teachers plan interesting and exciting learning experiences such as sculpting a lion or using computerised toys.

In Years 1 to 6, the quality of teaching is consistently good. Where teaching is most effective, challenging tasks are set for pupils of all ability levels. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils rose to the challenge of creating an image of the sea as a hungry dog from the first line of a James Reeve poem. In most lessons, teachers successfully plan tasks that excite and motivate pupils and make good links between the different subjects. As a result, pupils concentrate very well and make good progress. Teachers follow a clear action plan designed to improve the teaching of writing skills but not enough attention is given to improving pupils' spelling. All teachers carefully mark pupils' work and monitor their progress closely. They use the information well to set challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well provided for by teachers and teaching assistants who demonstrate a good range of specialist teaching skills. Parents appreciate the quality of teaching and the approachability of all staff.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

An outstanding curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, very well, inspiring them with a desire to learn. A strength is the creative way staff link subjects together. A literacy session, for example, included elements of geography, art and mathematics. Robotic Lego sessions successfully promote literacy and numeracy skills and pupils confidently use computers to support their learning in most subjects. The personal, health and social education curriculum is effective and includes a strong emphasis on developing an understanding of citizenship. This culminates in each class electing a 'citizen of the week'. A good focus on music gives pupils opportunities to play a range of stringed instruments, developing their creativity well and adding to their enjoyment of school.

An outstanding range of after-school and holiday activities enrich pupils' learning and this is paving the way for Extended School status. A very wide range of visits and visitors further enhances the curriculum. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from an exciting curriculum. Good emphasis is given to developing language and social skills that are identified as weaknesses on entry.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The good quality care, guidance and support provided for pupils make a significant contribution towards their personal development and good progress.

All staff work hard and successfully to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met effectively. The positive relationships ensure that pupils are confident about whom they can turn to for help. A wide range of external agencies supports pupils' individual needs. Child protection procedures are in place and pupils say they feel safe in school. Most parents agree with this view. Risk assessments are robust and support the school's

health and safety systems. All pupils are provided with hats, for example, as there is no shade from the sun in the outdoor area. The school tracks pupils' academic and personal progress carefully, and some older pupils are involved in setting their own targets and assessing their work. The school is beginning to write the specific targets for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in simpler terms in order to help them understand them better. Children in the Foundation Stage are supported well, giving them a good start to their education. Pupils in Year 6 are very well prepared for transfer to secondary school with numerous joint activities, which they enjoy.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is an outstanding leader and has provided clear educational direction over the past 10 years. This has resulted in a strong impetus to improvement, with strengths identified at the previous inspection being maintained and new ones being developed. The very able deputy headteacher contributes much to the school's success. The enthusiasm and energy of the leadership team is clearly evident, with all key staff working exceptionally well to monitor rigorously the effectiveness of the school. The management of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is particularly effective.

Financial management is good and ensures that a wide range of resources is available for all subjects. Resources for modern technology, in particular, have been significantly improved with computers readily accessible and used well. Pupils' achievement has improved, helping to raise standards measurably since the last inspection. The school has managed this despite a significant number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual time, together with an increasing number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities entering the school.

Self-evaluation is reasonably accurate, with the school judging themselves as good in all areas. The school is not complacent and, because self-evaluation is effective, aspects of pupils' work that can be improved such as writing skills and spelling are quickly identified and acted upon. This ensures that the school has a good capacity to further improve. Governors do a sound job, but they are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring the effectiveness of standards or the quality of provision. The school's developments place great emphasis on providing pupils with a stimulating, inspiring and challenging curriculum, one which makes them want to come to school and to learn. Pupils express great pride in belonging to the school and in their achievements.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to everyone and looking at your work. Below are the things that we particularly liked.

- How well you all behave in lessons. You all seem to enjoy coming to school so much and we are not surprised by this after meeting your teachers and seeing the exciting and interesting things that they give you to do.
- Your headteacher is doing a fantastic job and is supported exceptionally well by her deputy and senior staff.
- The good start that you all have in the Nursery and Reception classes. You could do with some shade for the outdoor area so that you can stay out longer when it is so hot and sunny, as it was during the inspection.
- Your good progress in reading, mathematics and science.
- The excellent opportunities that you have to learn new things in school such as learning to play a stringed instrument and in the many after-school clubs that there are for you to enjoy.
- Finally, we were very impressed with how well you are cared for and supported by all the staff, especially those of you who find learning some things difficult.

We are asking your headteacher, staff and governors to concentrate on improving two things in particular:

- your spelling needs to be improved as it is affecting the quality of your writing
- all your governors need to try and help the school staff more in finding ways to make your school even better.

Thank you again for helping us with the inspection of your school. We can see why you are so proud of it and why you like your teachers so much. We really enjoyed our two days with you.