



Wath CofE (A) Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106932
LEA Rotherham
Inspection number 277662
Inspection dates 5 October 2005 to 6 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Stephen Hardwick HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Barnsley Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Wath-upon-Deane
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Rotherham, South
			Yorkshire S63 6PY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01709 760471
Number on roll	227	Fax number	01709 760515
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M Blackburn
Date of previous inspection	6 December 1999	Headteacher	Mr David Silvester

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Wath CE Primary School is situated in the centre of Wath-upon-Deane, a large village in a former coal-mining area between Rotherham and Barnsley. The number of pupils on roll is similar to the average; almost all are white British, though two pupils speak English as an additional language. A quarter of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and a similar proportion have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities; both these figures are slightly above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wath CE Primary School provides well for its pupils. Inspectors agree with the school that all of the key areas of its work are good; it offers good value for money. Given their starting points, the pupils achieve well particularly during Key Stage 1. By Year 6 they have the basic skills and work habits to stand them in good stead at secondary school, though some struggle to explain themselves orally. The quality of teaching is good, allowing the pupils to make secure gains in lessons, within a curriculum that meets requirements and is enriched by a wide range of additional activities. Particular care is taken over the pupils' personal development, well-being and safety. For their part, the pupils are well behaved and enjoy learning but they are not fully aware of the standards they have reached or what they should be aiming for next.

The headteacher gives a strong lead, and other staff are effective in carrying out their management responsibilities. Key improvements have been brought about since the school's last inspection in 1999, especially over raising attendance. Governors are very supportive but they are too reliant on the headteacher in providing strategic direction for the school and in evaluating its work. Nonetheless, monitoring of the school's performance is thorough, there are carefully laid plans for the future, and the school is well placed to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

The school's plans recognise the need to:

- raise standards of speaking;
- provide pupils with a clearer picture of their levels of attainment and their targets for future work.

In addition:

- the governors need to increase their role in providing strategic direction within the school's overall plans and in checking its performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Taking the school as a whole, the pupils make good progress. Based on a comparison with other schools in Rotherham, the pupils in the Foundation Stage have levels of attainment that are average or just below average, and the boys are markedly behind the girls. They achieve well in Key Stage 1 and by Year 6 almost all the pupils reach the levels expected for their age. Moreover, the variations in the performance of boys and girls are being addressed: in 2004 there was no significant difference in their progress at Key Stage 2.

Over the past three years the pupils have performed well in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils reaching the basic target level for their

age has generally been above the national average, with substantial proportions reaching the higher grades within this level.

The results at Key Stage 2 have shown a rising trend: over the last two years the percentage of pupils reaching the target Level 4 has been at or above the national average in all of the tests and the school surpassed all but one of its targets in 2005. There has been some variation within the subjects. In 2005, standards in English, particularly in writing, rose considerably and in science all the pupils reached Level 4 and half of them reached the higher Level 5. In 2004 the pupils performed especially strongly in mathematics, with a dip in 2005.

The pupils in Key Stage 2, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, have made the expected progress. Compared with their starting points at the end of Year 2, the Year 6 pupils in 2004 made better gains than their predecessors, and the scores in English in 2005 demonstrate that the school is successfully tackling a relative weakness in this subject.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils like school. They appreciate the opportunities they are offered and the way adults look after them. In return they work hard. This mutual respect characterises relationships within the school. Pupils are considerate towards each other and have good social skills. They behave well in the main, and, although there is occasionally some boisterousness, this is due to natural exuberance not naughtiness. They understand what is right and wrong and follow the school rules they helped to create. They have a growing understanding of their own heritage and environment as well as the wider world, but, although they have some awareness of diversity of cultures in Britain, this is not extensive. Pupils feel safe and well cared for and know how to keep healthy. They feel their views are listened to and regard the school council as their forum for making changes. Pupils are proud that the new fish aquarium came about through their own initiative. The good personal and work habits that pupils are gaining are useful ones for their future. However, although attendance has improved over the past few years to almost the national average, too many pupils are taken on holiday in term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are carefully planned, prepared and organised, based on learning objectives that underpin the work and are shared with the pupils. The teachers' explanations are clear and their questioning is varied to allow for the range of pupils' attainment in each class. The additional adults in lessons contribute strongly to the work, particularly in leading groups and helping individuals. There is a brisk pace to work and the teachers are demanding in terms of attention

and effort. The stronger lessons are marked out by sharply focused sections in which all the pupils are required to answer, enabling the teacher to check that everyone has understood before moving on.

The pupils respond well and make good progress. They listen carefully, try hard, follow the routines and learn to organise materials and work neatly. They enjoy what they do and react maturely to moments of humour. They are confident and keen to speak but they are not always fully clear in presenting their ideas or doing justice to their understanding.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned and covers all required subjects. There is an appropriate emphasis on promoting pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, but their knowledge and progress in other subjects are not neglected. Information and communication technology is well used to develop learning across the curriculum. Pupils' personal development is also well promoted through specific topics such as 'Feelings, Friends and Friendship', and through subjects like science, where they learn about healthy diets and the importance of exercise. A current priority for the school is to strengthen this aspect even more and to try to ensure that all learning is exciting and fun. The school has rightly judged that pupils' speaking skills are not strong enough and an extra emphasis on planning activities to develop these is also a priority. Many well-attended clubs cater for pupils' interests outside of lessons. Local organisations help with some of these, especially in sport where the local football and rugby clubs come in to run activities. Taekwondo looks set to be a popular new favourite.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are at the centre of all that the school does. It ensures that they are safe, secure and well-cared for so that they can grow and develop well both personally and academically. This approach is reflected in the way the school is kept clean and tidy, with attractive displays. Arrangements for child protection and for health and safety are rigorous. Pupils are very well known by adults. Having a teacher and assistant in every class is popular with pupils as it means there are two people to help them and to whom they can go if they have a problem - although some pupils said 'we never have problems!' Pupils with additional needs, such as those with learning difficulties, are well catered for, with the school working in effective partnership with parents and with outside agencies when necessary. Pupils also play a part in caring for others through, for example, the Year 6 pupils acting as helpers in the infant playground. Within this supportive environment pupils develop well. They receive advice on how to improve their work but this is not always detailed enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a strong lead to the school and, with hard work from the staff, has been effective in taking it forward. The management arrangements allow senior staff and co-ordinators to fulfil their roles well. They have time to carry out their duties, and they know what they have to do and how their efforts fit into the school's overall plans. The governors are very supportive of the school and meet their responsibilities, but they are too reliant on the headteacher for strategic planning and for checking how well the school is faring.

The issues raised at the school's last inspection have largely been addressed, although the need to be vigilant over levels of attendance remains. Further key improvements have also been brought about, for instance in establishing a unit for the Foundation Stage, strengthening staffing, and enhancing the building and resources. However, the emphasis has rightly been on raising standards, especially in writing, where the school has met with considerable success.

There is a thorough regime for monitoring the school's performance, for instance through analysing test results and monitoring teaching. The outcomes are evaluated and, alongside the views of staff and pupils, used to inform future actions. The school's improvement plan is well conceived, based on appropriate priorities and includes measures to gauge whether the intentions have been met. Given the strength of the leadership and management, and the expertise among the teachers, the school is well placed to achieve its goals and to continue to improve.

Much has been undertaken to foster links with parents and other agencies. The views of parents have been canvassed through a questionnaire, there is a partnership with the business community to promote reading and classes on information and communication technology have been organised for adults. The school is well regarded by parents and in the locality.

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	2	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?	2	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	1	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

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

We very much enjoyed our two days in your school: thank you for welcoming us and talking to us about what you were doing. We were impressed by your good behaviour, your politeness and your hard work. This helped your teachers a great deal, and enabled you to learn.

We found many good things about your school.

- Mr Silvester leads the school well and the governors are keen to help, whenever they can.
- The teachers and assistants work hard to plan lessons for you that are lively and interesting, and allow you to do your best.
- All the adults at school ensure you are happy and safe, and they encourage you to play well together, eat properly and take part in sport. Your school is clean and tidy, with lots of attractive displays.
- There are many extra activities and visits for you to enjoy, such as the trip to Filey for Year 6.

Mr Silvester and the teachers want to keep improving things for you. We agree with them that it would be helpful if you had targets, like the ones some of you have for reading, so you have a better idea of how well you are doing and what you should be aiming for next. Also, you were very keen to answer your teachers' questions but you sometimes struggled to explain what you wanted to say. We think you could do this better, just as you have improved your writing.

We hope you continue to enjoy school and that you are successful in the future.