



Wilmslow Grange Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 111014
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278570
Inspection dates 27 March 2006 to 28 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Jim Alexander CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ullswater Road
School category	Community		Handforth
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 3NG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01625 526566
Number on roll	241	Fax number	01625 536006
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr C Jarrett
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2001	Headteacher	Mr G Mendham

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Wilmslow Grange is a recent amalgamation of two schools, which in September 2005 joined onto a single site. It is now an average size school, with 24 children attending the nursery. There is a slightly higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups attending the school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those entitled to free school meals remains below average but have increased following amalgamation. The school has Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school and the value for money provided is satisfactory. The school has recently faced a period of disruption caused by amalgamation with another local school. The associated building project and some difficult staffing issues contributed to a dip in standards in 2005. These issues have been resolved and both the more stable situation within school and the effective partnership with the local authority are resulting in the necessary improvements being made. The inspectors agree with the school's view of its effectiveness.

Children's achievement is satisfactory. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children meet the national goals set for their age. The standards children reach at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory. There is a good curriculum throughout the school. Teaching is satisfactory, although work is not always challenging enough for children, particularly the higher attaining in Key Stage 1. How work is marked also needs more consistency across the school and needs to include better guidance, ensuring children clearly understand how they can improve. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their needs well met. Children's personal development is good; they enjoy school and attend well. The school cares for them and keeps them safe.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation procedures have improved, resulting in a better understanding of what needs to be done to raise children's attainment. However, targets set do not challenge pupils consistently well. The school has the confidence of parents. The positive steps that have been taken recently to raise standards demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise children's achievement, particularly the more able in Key Stage 1, by implementing and monitoring the targets set to consistently challenge children to achieve well.
- Improve the quality of teaching by using the assessments made of children's work to plan challenging lessons to ensure they make good progress.
- Give children better guidance when evaluating their progress so they know how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter the nursery with standards that are broadly typical for their age and progress through Foundation Stage is good. An additional number of children join the school as they enter Year 1; consequently attainment on entry to Key Stage 1 is broadly average.

By the end of Year 2 children reach broadly average standards in mathematics and reading; significantly above average in writing. The proportion of children achieving higher levels however is below average, with attainment in mathematics being significantly below average.

By the end of Year 6 achievement and standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science for all abilities. Targets set by the school in 2005 were met for those pupils achieving higher levels in mathematics, higher and lower levels in science, but were not met at lower levels in Mathematics or English. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

The school has developed a strong partnership with the local authority and positive action is being taken to identify what needs to be done to raise standards further. For example a system of setting targets for individual pupils has recently been introduced to enable them to make better progress; its impact is yet to be seen.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being is good. They are polite, helpful and mostly behave well so that the school operates as a happy, orderly community. Children enjoy their lessons and most work hard. For example, one child said, 'It's a great school; I wouldn't want to go anywhere else'. They are given a range of duties to develop their sense of responsibility and are encouraged to make suggestions as to how their school might be improved through the work of the school council. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They gain an awareness of other religions through lessons and visits and are generous in their charitable giving. They are well prepared for life in our diverse society. Children benefit from a wide range of visits and visitors, and this is reflected in their history work, for example. A healthy lifestyle is promoted well, and children are encouraged to take regular exercise. Close attention is given to the development of children's basic academic skills and residential visits contribute well to their enjoyment and development of their social skills. In lessons they learn to work independently and collaboratively and to make considered decisions. These factors are valuable in securing their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers have good relationships with children and use a range of strategies to engage and motivate them. Lessons are well planned and build systematically on what children already know. The use of interactive whiteboards enlivens lessons and stimulates children. They say, 'Teachers make learning fun'. Most children consequently have positive attitudes, enjoy their learning and

behave well. Good support from well briefed teaching assistants contributes effectively to children's learning, especially for those with additional learning needs. In the more effective lessons children make good progress as a result of the high expectations, good pace and clear explanations of the teacher. Group discussions are used effectively to enable children to share ideas. For example, in a lively geography lesson with Year 5, the children showed a good understanding of the need to consider others when discussing how to research information on the weather. However, in some lessons, although other elements are good, children's progress slows because the level of challenge and expectation of their achievement is not high enough.

Children's work and progress is systematically assessed and recorded. However, teachers do not use enough developmental comments when marking work to enable children to clearly understand how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of children well. The school modestly grades this aspect of its provision as satisfactory. It is carefully planned and organised with due emphasis placed on developing children's basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The Foundation Stage curriculum covers all the required areas of learning. Provision in information and communication technology ICT has improved since the last inspection. Computers are now used more to support other areas of the curriculum. A good range of visits to museums and art galleries enrich learning. A programme of personal, social and health education supports other aspects of children's learning well.

A broad range of extra curricular activities is provided including sports, a steel band and drama. Children greatly enjoy the residential visits, which boost their academic and social development well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school's pastoral provision supports children's emotional and personal development, and adult praise encourages good behaviour. Children are also encouraged to support each other by acting as 'peer mediators'. Good attention to health, safety and welfare ensures children feel safe and secure. Child protection and health and safety procedures are in place.

Children are involved in setting their own targets for improvement but do not always have sufficient guidance on how to improve. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported with clear targets for improvement; this is confirmed by positive comments made by parents. Vulnerable children are also well cared for. Induction arrangements into the nursery and main school are good, and the school provides a smooth transition to high school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The headteacher has been actively involved in the recent building developments and this has taken much of his time, due to the complexity of the project. The headteacher has also successfully managed the reduction of staff to match the needs of the new school. During this period some weaknesses in teaching have also been successfully addressed. The headteacher has been well supported by the acting-deputy headteacher and other senior staff during this unsettled period. The role of the special needs co-ordinator has been temporarily managed by the headteacher in partnership with a member of the support staff. With the appointment of a new deputy headteacher, who takes up the post after Easter, the staffing situation is becoming much more stable.

Subject leadership has developed well recently and is now strong. These teachers monitor and evaluate provision well. They are developing a system to track pupils' progress and this is beginning to give them a clear understanding of how to raise standards further. However, the implementation of targets to challenge pupils to achieve well is not yet fully embedded in the work of the school.

The governing body supports the school and ensures statutory requirements are met. They are developing procedures for checking school performance to ensure appropriate challenge can be offered.

The school's partnership with the local authority has proved very positive. The school has an accurate view of its effectiveness and the quality of its provision. The school has been through a turbulent time and the progress made recently demonstrates its capacity to improve further.

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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?	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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	2	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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?	3	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?	3	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

Thank you very much for being so welcoming when we recently visited your school. You were all polite and friendly and spoke well about your school. We were pleased to see how well all the adults and children got on together, this obviously helps you in your lessons.

Your teachers and other staff have worked together well recently to keep improving your school. They plan a lot of interesting things for you to do and make sure that you are safe and well cared for. You told us that you really enjoyed your lessons, especially how ICT helps you to learn. The school offers you a good range of other activities which you also clearly enjoy.

To help you to do even better, we have asked teachers to use what they know about how well you learn to set you more challenging targets and let you know how to achieve them. This will ensure Wilmslow Grange becomes an even better school.

We very much enjoyed talking with you and your teachers, and wish you and the school the very best for the future.