



Wormley Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117400
LEA HERTFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280069
Inspection dates 26 January 2006 to 27 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Alison Pangbourne LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	St Laurence Drive
School category	Voluntary controlled		EN10 6LH
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01992 303331
Number on roll	342	Fax number	01992 303332
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Brenda Flowerdew
Date of previous inspection	29 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Sue Cranston

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 26 January 2006 - 27 January 2006	Inspection number 280069
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school with close links with the local churches. Most pupils come from white British families with a few from minority ethnic heritages. A small number are at an early stage of learning English. There are a few pupils from Traveller families. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is a little higher than in most schools. Most of these pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and a few are autistic. The number of pupils entitled to a free school meal is average. A high proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school between Years 3 and 6. The characteristics are changing with more pupils than previously joining with learning difficulties and from unsettled backgrounds. When children start school standards are below those typical of 3 and 4-year-olds, particularly in social and language development. Following staffing difficulties in the Reception class, staffing has been improved and Foundation Stage provision, re-organised.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides pupils with a satisfactory education. In its self-evaluation, the school judged itself to be better than this but it needs to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress to justify its view. Parents and pupils hold the school in high regard and this is reflected in pupils' good personal development. The children now get a good start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress. Standards for 7-year-olds are below average, particularly in writing. By the time they leave, when they are 11 years old, standards are broadly average. Standards in mathematics are just below average. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. A significant number of pupils join the school during Years 3 to 6, often with learning difficulties. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they receive good support. The school is strongly committed to accepting all pupils regardless of background or learning difficulty. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Staff manage pupils well and teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties effectively. Teachers sometimes spend too much time talking to the class and literacy lessons are not always as well planned as they should be. This affects the progress made. The headteacher provides sound leadership and has taken appropriate action to ensure that the issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. This shows that the school has a sound capacity to improve. The school improvement plan rightly identifies areas for improvement but does not include sharply focussed ways in which progress towards them can be measured. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress made, particularly in mathematics and writing, by continuing the emphasis on problem solving and planning consistently in literacy with a clear emphasis on what pupils will learn.
- Raise the quality of teaching by improving pace and giving pupils more opportunities to get on with their own work rather than listen to the teacher.
- Improve the quality of the school improvement plan by making it easier to measure when targets have been reached.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The youngest children in the Foundation Stage make good progress because of the good teaching and the interesting things to do. By the beginning of Year 1, most pupils have not reached the expected level for their age because they have a lot of catching up to do. Recently, standards have been below average for 7-year-olds, particularly in writing. In 2005, standards were below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. Difficulties in recruiting teachers over the past few years meant that the younger children did not have a good start. As a result, they still had ground to make up. Standards are rising slowly because improved assessment procedures are having a positive impact. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress. A significant number have learning difficulties and this tends to lower

standards. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress. Standards have been broadly average recently. Last year, standards were average in English and science and just below average in mathematics. Standards are slowly rising and are likely to be higher this year. A higher proportion of pupils exceed the level expected for their age in English and science than in most schools. The school is working to increase the proportion in mathematics. The turnover of pupils makes it difficult for the school to set and reach realistic targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, Traveller pupils and those who are gifted and talented make sound progress. Those with learning difficulties do well because their progress is carefully monitored and effective support is given to meet their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good and effective in creating a friendly school. Pupils enjoy lessons and most behave well in class and play well together in the playground. They are aware of the importance of healthy eating and fully approve of the 'healthy tuckshop'. They also understand the importance of physical activity, for which they have good opportunities through two physical education lessons each week and the wide range of clubs after school. All pupils have a good opportunity to learn to swim in the school's own pool. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils feel that they are involved in the running of the school through the school council, and in Year 6 take responsibility in various ways, such as helping in the school office. The school's links with local churches are strong, but pupils also have the opportunity to learn about and appreciate the festivals and places of worship of other faiths. They have good opportunities to work together in groups, which prepares them suitably for future life in the community, where they take part in events such as the Village of the Year competition. The appropriate emphasis on literacy, numeracy and computer skills provides a sound basis for their economic well-being. Attendance is satisfactory and pupils arrive on time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some examples of good teaching were seen during the inspection. Here, teachers question pupils well to check on their understanding and extend their thinking. They manage the pupils well so that lessons are calm. Teaching assistants give thoughtful support to individual pupils and groups in activity sessions. Teachers in the older classes make good use of electronic whiteboards to show video clips and give demonstrations to extend learning. In more mundane lessons, pace is slow and teachers spend too long explaining to pupils what they want them to do. As a result, not enough gets done. Activities can be too directed by teachers so that pupils, especially the more able, do not take enough responsibility for their own learning. Most teachers find planning for the wide range of pupils' ability

quite difficult and this affects their learning and achievement. Planning, especially to support pupils' literacy, needs to be consistent across classes and more detailed to cater successfully for different ability groups in each class. This is particularly the case in English in Years 1 and 2 where it is not always clear what the pupils have to do to learn new things. By contrast, planning is best in Years 5 and 6 where there is a clear emphasis on learning. Teachers assess their pupils' progress regularly in suitable ways, considering test results and class work. They know the pupils well. Pupils with learning difficulties are carefully identified and have clear, helpful individual education plans which support them well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some strengths. Creative subjects are successfully stressed as a support to pupils who find written tasks difficult. There is a high profile for art and music with special provision for those who may have talent. In most subjects, the national schemes of work are used helpfully to ensure that all the right material is covered. Children in the Nursery and Reception class enjoy the wide range of exciting activities that gives them good opportunities to learn and practise early skills of reading, writing and number. The residential journeys provided annually for all the older pupils are a good example of painstaking provision planned to meet the pupils' needs for personal and social development. There is a wide range of clubs and an interesting selection of visits and visitors. All this encourages pupils to be safe, active and healthy and develop an interest in music and the arts.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a healthy and safe environment in which pupils feel secure. Child protection procedures are in place and risk assessments are carried out adequately. There are good strategies for dealing with any unsatisfactory behaviour. There is a wide range of strategies for supporting pupils' personal development. A clear, helpful guide which the deputy headteacher discusses carefully with each teacher ensures the right personal support for each pupil. Pupils with learning difficulties receive good support, both within the school and from outside agencies. The school also provides good support for potentially vulnerable pupils. Pupils feel that there is someone they can talk to if they are in difficulty, including a counsellor. They learn about the dangers of drug misuse and about sex and relationships. Parents have a positive view of the school and appreciate the fact that they can approach teachers easily if they have a problem. Pupils know what they are expected to achieve in English and mathematics, and they say that teachers' comments, as well as the marking of their work, help them to know what to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides sound leadership, well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior staff. They are committed to the pupils' personal development and well-being. All are open to new ideas and to raising standards. They ensure that the significant number of pupils, who sometimes arrive with no records of what they can already do, are helped to learn. This is a challenging task when lower attaining pupils arrive during Year 6 with little time left in the school. The school works hard to include pupils from all backgrounds and this contributes to the family ethos. Most aspects of the school's self-evaluation are satisfactory. The headteacher has identified the right areas for improvement in the school improvement plan. However, areas for improvement are not tightly matched to raising standards and this makes them difficult to measure. The school is currently working to help those who only just reached the level expected for their age in Year 2 to reach the expected level by Year 6. The co-ordinator for pupils with learning difficulties provides good leadership and monitors their progress very closely, contributing to their good progress. The views of all members of the community are welcomed and parents are positive about the school, particularly in the way that it meets the needs of individuals. One parent said 'I thank Wormley staff for helping a 6-year-old in desperate need.' Governance is satisfactory. Governors provide adequate oversight of the school's work. The 'children's governor' joins in many experiences with the pupils and sits on the school council. This provides an effective link between pupils and governors. The school has taken appropriate action to address the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. It has a sound capacity to improve.

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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	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	3	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?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	2	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

Following our visit to your school, we would like to thank you for helping us. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. What we liked best - you enjoy school, behave well and get on well together - you made us feel welcome and greeted us with a friendly smile - the children in the nursery and reception class get a good start to school - your parents like the school - those of you who find it hard to learn get lots of help - all the grown-ups take good care of you and help you get on. What we have asked your school to do now to make it even better - help more of you to do better in mathematics and writing - plan your literacy lessons better so you can learn more effectively - give you more opportunities in class to work things out for yourselves - improve the way the school plans for its future with a clear emphasis on helping you to achieve more. We wish you all the best with your learning. Enjoy your time at Wormley Primary School.