



The Martin Wilson School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123447
LEA Shropshire
Inspection number 281480
Inspection dates 1 November 2005 to 2 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ian Knight RISP

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | New Park Road |
| School category | Community | | Castle Fields |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 2SP |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01743 236520 |
| Number on roll | 211 | Fax number | 01743 245 737 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Ms Karen Benjamin |
| Date of previous inspection | 12 June 2000 | Headteacher | Mr John Golightly |

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|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Martin Wilson School is a medium sized primary school serving one of the most disadvantaged areas in the county. Almost all pupils are of White British or European backgrounds. A few are Asian or of mixed heritage. Six pupils are identified as being at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is high, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with a statement of special need.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges itself as being satisfactory, but inspectors find that it is good and gives good value for money. Children join the school with standards well below those normally found. They make good progress throughout the school because of good teaching. Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher knows exactly how he wants the school to be and this vision is shared by staff. The senior team identified that the school needed to concentrate more on improving how pupils learn. Work on 'learning to learn' and innovative techniques to improve learning and behaviour are consistently applied throughout the school.

The curriculum has been developed well so that it meets the needs of all pupils in the school, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, or who speak English as an additional language. As a result teaching, learning, behaviour, personal development and achievement have all improved and are good. The school cares for its pupils well. These improvements indicate the school has the capacity to improve further. Parents think highly of the headteacher and the school. Governance is only satisfactory because the governing body is not involved in the long term planning process at an early enough stage. Although the school sets rigorous targets for individuals' progress each year, it has recognised that it needs to establish straightforward, short-term targets that are negotiated with pupils because pupils do not always know exactly what they need to do to get better.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement the school improvement plan target regarding the setting of short term, straightforward targets for each pupil. This will ensure that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve and can work towards their targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Early Years Centre with attainment that is especially low in the areas of language and personal development. Good teaching that focuses particularly on children's personal and social skills enables good progress, but pupils still enter Year 1 with standards that are below those expected.

Results from the 2004 National Curriculum tests show that standards at the end of Year 2 were average in writing and mathematics, but very low in reading. The provisional results for Year 2 in 2005 show a significant improvement in the number of pupils gaining the higher levels in reading, and standards are just within the average range. Results from the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 were broadly average and had been rising since 2002. The provisional results for 2005 are similar.

School data shows that pupils make good progress across Years 1 to 6. The school sets challenging targets for all pupils that most attain. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities often exceed their targets because they receive good support. Whilst the few pupils who speak English as an additional language do not receive support from outside agencies, adults provide good support in lessons which ensures that these pupils make the same progress as others.

The school has been awarded the 'Artsmark Gold' award by the Arts Council in recognition of the quality of the work that is achieved in this area. Pupils are encouraged to investigate and experiment with various artistic elements and their work, which is displayed around the school, is of a high standard.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Throughout the school pupils recognise the importance of working together and sharing ideas and resources. They are clearly motivated by praise and encouragement, and like coming to school, as shown by their attendance and good behaviour. Pupils show a good deal of respect for each other and for adults. They develop a sense of curiosity and enjoy solving problems, particularly when using the information and communication technology (ICT) facilities. A range of extra-curricular activities and community links foster good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, through fund raising for local charities pupils realise the difficulties that homeless people in this country experience. The promotion of the National Fruit Scheme and sporting opportunities give pupils an awareness of the importance of good health. The school promotes self esteem very effectively through celebrating a range of pupils' achievements. Safety awareness is actively promoted. For example, the headteacher explained to pupils the danger of bad light at this time of the year when leaving school with a special emphasis on road safety. The elected school council enables pupils to make a positive contribution to their school community in initiatives such as the purchasing of new sports equipment.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school's focus on techniques that enable pupils to 'learn to learn' is evident in all classrooms. Pupils understand about learning styles and are comfortable discussing such techniques as mind and sense mapping. Teachers are skilful at using a range of methods to maintain pupils' attention, including 'Brain Gym' and the imaginative use of ICT. Questions and tasks are closely matched to the needs of individual learners. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to lessons, supporting pupils including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, and leading small groups. Staff enable

children in the Early Years Centre to develop independence through the daily 'Plan-Do-Review' sessions, in which they choose their own activities. Adults question children about their ideas at a level appropriate to their needs. During these sessions adults play alongside children effectively extending their thinking and vocabulary and enabling children to remain purposefully engaged.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned and supports pupils' personal development well. It reflects the school's vision of itself as a learning community. The wide range of stimulating activities and imaginative use of resources in the Early Years Centre enables children to achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because work is planned and adapted to meet their needs. Extra-curricular activities are good, supported by visits from professional artists and musicians. These add to pupils' wide experiences and enjoyment. External agencies such as the Family Learning organisation provide useful activities during and after school for both pupils and their parents.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are cared for well. Procedures for child protection are firmly established. Careful recording of concerns and good links with support services ensure the well-being of vulnerable pupils. Pupils are confident that adults listen to their concerns, care for them well and will deal with any problems quickly and fairly. They are given opportunities to take responsibility, for example, being representatives on the school council. The 'Star Pupils' from each class have afternoon tea with the headteacher, a feast they all enjoy.

Children in the Early Years Centre settle quickly at school because they are well supported and cared for. From day one children are expected to be independent and manage their own routines.

Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress at regular meetings. However, not all pupils have negotiated individual targets for improvement. As a result, their understanding of how to improve is satisfactory rather than good. Parents know the school provides a safe place for children and speak highly of the headteacher and his staff.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Shortly after his appointment the headteacher realised that, although teaching was good, pupils were not making enough progress. Together with his assistant headteachers, he identified barriers to learning for pupils, including the low self esteem of many pupils, negative attitudes, and the disruptive behaviour of a minority. From this came the school's high profile focus on 'learning to learn'. The headteacher inspired the whole school community so that this vision is shared and is evident in all classrooms. For example, pupils understand different learning styles and techniques to support them, such as mind maps. As a result, pupils are more positive about learning, behaviour is improved, progress is quicker, and test results are rising, albeit modestly. Parents praise the headteacher highly. None were critical. One parent wrote, 'I have never met a head so involved in every aspect of the school. He always seems to like and care about all the children and does a lot to reassure us as parents.'

The school's evaluation of its own work is accurate and based on test data and good quality monitoring carried out by the senior leadership team. It recognises that there is still work to do and the satisfactory school improvement plan includes appropriate targets and actions. A weakness of school improvement planning is that it is short term and not based on a set of explicit aims for the school. The governing body is aware that it is not involved early enough in its construction. The recent improvements in the school, however, indicate a good capacity for further improvement. Grade: 2

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Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

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 | 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

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| 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 | 3 | 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 | 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 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 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

The Martin Wilson School New Park Road Castlefields Shrewsbury Shropshire SY1 2SP

3 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing what you think about your school. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

What we liked about the school

Your teachers teach you well because they understand how you learn and what level you're working at.

You understand things like mind maps which help you to learn.

You behave well which helps your teachers to teach you, and you to learn.

The headteacher knows the school really well and is helping it to get better.

What we have asked your school to do next

Not all of you have targets that tell you what you need to do to get better. We have asked the school to talk to you about your targets and you can help by trying to remember them in all of your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Ian Knight (Lead inspector)