



Wrockwardine Wood Church of England Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123520
LEA Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number 281497
Inspection dates 13 October 2005 to 14 October 2005
Reporting inspector Peter Clifton RISP

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Church Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Trench
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Telford, Shropshire TF2 7HG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01952 605371
Number on roll	284	Fax number	01952605371
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Louise Inwood
Date of previous inspection	29 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr Iain McLeish

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves the community of Trench and the nearby area of Donnington on the outskirts of Telford. The pupils' ethnicity is predominately White British with small groups of Indian and Caribbean pupils. The school is slightly bigger than the average sized school. It has an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The pupils come from a variety of backgrounds ranging from owner-occupied homes to council-owned estates.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005 HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Wrockwardine Junior School is successful at providing well for pupils' personal, moral social and cultural development and in promoting a strong partnership with parents. However, the school's overall effectiveness is inadequate and it provides unsatisfactory value for money. Too many pupils are underachieving in writing because teaching and the curriculum are not sufficiently well planned to meet their needs. The pupils' progress in writing is poor. These weaknesses are evident across the school and have been there since the time of the previous inspection. Too few pupils are reaching the higher levels in mathematics. The school judges itself incorrectly to be good.

The decline in the results is because the school does not check pupils' progress well enough nor the quality of teaching. As a result, planning for improvement has not been sharply focused and weaknesses remain unchallenged.

The evidence from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicates that teaching is unsatisfactory. The teaching of science is good and challenges pupils to think carefully. The curriculum is satisfactory and provides good opportunities for social and health education but there are weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work because it provides insufficient guidance about how pupils can improve. Pupils have inadequate knowledge of their own learning.

The school's very recent actions to draw on outside support and produce an action plan specifically to address the issues in writing are a promising development. However, the school's actions up to this point have been far too slow and ineffective and the school's position for further improvement is inadequate.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the effectiveness of self-evaluation so that weaknesses in standards are identified and tracked rigorously
- Ensure that planning for teaching and learning matches the needs of pupils so that they do as well as they should, particularly in writing and mathematics for the more able pupils
- Develop marking and other assessment practice so that pupils are much clearer about what they need to do to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

The pupils enter the school with standards that are consistently above the national average. They make good progress in science and satisfactory progress in mathematics.

However, the progress made in English is unsatisfactory and in writing it is sometimes poor. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress overall as do minority ethnic groups within the school.

Standards in English were too low at the time of the previous inspection and, over the past six years, this has been the weakest subject. Standards in English are below the national average. The 2003 and 2004 results show unsatisfactory progress in English with writing being the main weakness. The provisional results in 2005 show a further sharp drop in writing standards to a point where they are likely to be well below average and this represents poor progress.

Writing standards are below average due to weaknesses in lesson planning and low expectations. The school does not build sufficiently well on the skills pupils have when they enter school. This is particularly affecting the progress of the more able pupils who are underachieving. The pupils do not have an adequate understanding of what they need to do to improve and this is also impeding their progress. The targets set by the school in English are not being met. In mathematics, the pupils are reaching the targets set for the proportions of pupils who achieve Level 4 or above but not for those reaching Level 5.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

This area is a strength of the school. Parents report that their children like school. The pupils enjoy what they do in lessons, concentrate well and enthusiastically join in the activities on offer. Attendance is good, above the national average. Behaviour is good in lessons, and during play and lunch times. Pupils say there is no bullying or unacceptable behaviour. They particularly enjoy the trips; "the Roman soldier was brilliant, you could wear his armour and feel how heavy it was."

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils pray and reflect in the often lively assemblies and have a good grasp of moral messages such as 'do not judge by appearances.' Pupils gain a good awareness of other beliefs like Islam and Hinduism in special assemblies, and of different cultures in a hands-on way, for example, the African drumming. They develop well socially through being given a good range of responsibilities, which they take seriously.

Pupils appreciate the potential of the school council to give them a voice in the school, and the 'peer mediators' help them to deal with incidents. They know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils have positive views about being healthy, through diet and exercise. By raising funds for charities, they learn to care for others and make a good contribution to the community. Their understanding that gaining key skills such as writing is crucial for their future lives is underdeveloped.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. In the mixed age classes, teachers are not always successful in matching work to the wide range of abilities. As a result, the work given is often too hard or too easy. Too frequently, the nature of the task does not enable pupils to extend their skills. The marking of writing often exaggerates the quality of the outcomes and pupils do not know the steps necessary to improve their work or exactly what the criteria are for successful completion.

Teachers manage their classes well. They gain the attention of their pupils and use the good relationships they establish to motivate them to work conscientiously. The most effective lessons contain either sparkling or demanding starter sessions, as in mathematics, or have a strong practical element as in science. These practical lessons, in particular, challenge the thinking of the more able pupils and as a result they make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and lower attaining pupils get sound, and sometimes good, support from teaching assistants and as a result they make satisfactory progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities to meet the interests of pupils. A good range of social and health education activities enables pupils to grow in maturity and develop positive attitudes to learning.

The curriculum for writing is inadequate. Planning for literacy skills through other subjects is at an early stage of development. Numeracy skills are used well in a wide range of subjects. The more practically based science curriculum is effective in promoting achievement, because the different tasks set for the more able pupils are really demanding.

Enrichment opportunities are good. Pupils value them and the learning remains vivid in their minds. They loved the 'I can make a difference' project, because it used the computer. Many pupils benefit from the satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, well-being and welfare are high priorities in the school. When pupils were asked what they liked most about the school they said that the 'teachers were kind and caring'. Procedures for child protection are in place.

Pupils' overall progress is not sufficiently well tracked as they move through the school. As a result, some pupils are not supported adequately and the targets set for them are not raising expectations high enough. External agencies are used well to support pupils with learning difficulties.

The school provides a safe place for them to learn. A few pupils have concerns about the state of some of the toilets. Pupils feel that problems are dealt with effectively because there are always adults to talk to on a confidential basis.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Too little progress has been made since the last inspection in addressing serious weaknesses, particularly in writing. The headteacher, senior management team and subject co-ordinators have not adequately dealt with important issues identified in the previous inspection report. Consequently, a significant proportion of pupils still underachieve in writing and the most able pupils in mathematics. There have, however, been good improvements in the school's buildings, which now provide a good facility for teachers.

Governors are very supportive of the school and feel that they are well informed by the headteacher who always provides a range of options for discussion. They know the strengths of the school well and are aware of the weaknesses. However, they have been too easily satisfied with reasons given for the weaknesses rather than probe more deeply to identify the cause and to urge improvements to be made.

The school's own view of its performance is inaccurate, principally because it does not have rigorous evaluation systems in place. Although the quality of teaching is checked regularly, it is not sufficiently evaluative and little is done with the information to tackle underachievement. The school is not well placed to overcome these weaknesses in the future. The most recent action plan arising from the poor provisional English results in 2005 identifies some actions for improvement but the impact of these is not yet visible.

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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	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	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?	4	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?	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?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	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

Wrockwardine Wood C of E Junior School Church Lane Trench Telford TF2 7HG

15th October 2005

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly. I enjoyed talking to you and noticed how sensibly you behaved around the school and out on the playground. You told us a lot about your school and what you like and dislike. I found that there are some big improvements needed especially in helping you with your writing.

What we most liked about your school:

- Your good behaviour and politeness.
- Your enjoyment of school and how you care about each other.
- The progress you make in science.

We have asked your headteacher and others to work on:

- Identifying what needs to be improved in the school more carefully.
- Making sure that your work is not too hard or too easy especially with writing
- Helping you to understand what you have learned and that you know what you need to do next.

The adults in your school will be working hard together to make the school better for you. To help, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors will visit the school regularly to check the progress you are making.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Clifton Lead Inspector.