



Northwood Park Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134720
LEA Wolverhampton
Inspection number 282660
Inspection dates 28 February 2006 to 1 March 2006
Reporting inspector Michael Barron AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Collingwood Road
School category	Community		Bushbury
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Wolverhampton WV10 8DS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 558715
Number on roll	366	Fax number	01902 558723
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Caroline Nightingale
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs Gill Morris

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	28 February 2006 - 1 March 2006	282660

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Northwood Park Primary is a large school which caters for a mix of children from social and private housing in an area of high deprivation in Wolverhampton. It opened in September 2004 following the amalgamation of Collingwood Junior and Infant schools. Nearly a fifth of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well above the national average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Northwood Park is a satisfactory school which gives satisfactory value for money.

Pupils behave well. They are keen to come to school and attitudes to learning are good. Lessons provide challenging targets for pupils to achieve and standards are steadily rising. Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities they are provided with and parents value the support given to their children.

Children make sound progress in the Foundation Stage but by the time they start Year 1 they attain standards that are still well below the expected levels. Pupils make good progress in Year 1 and Year 2 because of good teaching but still attain below-average standards by the age of seven. The quality of teaching in Year 3 to Year 5 is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress. They make better progress in Year 6 because of good teaching, but still attain below average standards by the age of 11.

The quality of teaching is checked regularly. However, this monitoring does not always provide teachers with ideas about how they could further improve learning opportunities for pupils. The quality of marking varies throughout the school and does not always ensure that pupils know how to improve their work.

The school currently makes suitable provision to evaluate its own performance, but some aspects of this evaluation are not as accurate as they could be.

The headteacher's clear vision for the school and the effective initiatives she has put in place to raise standards mean the school has a sound capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to Year 5, in order to raise the standards pupils achieve.
- Give pupils a greater understanding of what they need to do to improve their work by improving the quality of teachers' marking.
- Improve the quality of lesson monitoring so that teachers have a clearer understanding of how to improve their teaching.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

While achievement is satisfactory, standards are still below average.

Children enter the Reception classes with well-below-average levels of skills and knowledge. They make satisfactory progress, but still attain well below the expected levels by the time they start Year 1. Their attainment is especially weak in language and numeracy.

Evidence from the school's assessments, pupils' work and discussions indicates that pupils' progress well in Year 1 and Year 2 to attain below-average standards by the age of seven. Pupils' progress in Year 3 to Year 5 is satisfactory, having improved alongside improvements made to pupils' behaviour. Standards attained by Year 6

pupils, whilst improving, are still below average and the school achieved the challenging targets set for Year 6 pupils in 2005. However, recent school initiatives to further improve achievement are beginning to have an effect. This was evident in the good level of progress observed in several well-taught lessons, which provided challenging targets for pupils.

Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with additional learning needs achieve as well as other pupils because provision to meet their specific and individual targets is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Behaviour and attitudes are good. The school's motto of 'always treat others as you would like them to treat you' is reflected well in pupils' caring relationships with one another. Pupils feel valued and respected and told inspectors, 'we like coming to school because the teachers are friendly and lessons are fun!' They are keen to become more involved in decision making and are increasingly having this opportunity, for example, through the work of the developing school council. Attendance is satisfactory.

The school promotes pupils' well-being effectively through experiences that include two hours of physical activity and swimming weekly and free fruit each day. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They are well aware of the need to keep safe, for example, when crossing local busy roads. Through charitable fundraising and when taking harvest gifts to local senior citizens, pupils are able gain an understanding of the value of contributing to the community. Older pupils have opportunities to gain insights into the world of work, for example, when undertaking office duties and through running stalls at summer and Christmas fairs. Nevertheless, more could be done to promote leadership and enterprise to assist their economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Good teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 has led to pupils making good progress in these year groups.

Teachers often provide a positive and encouraging climate in lessons. Pupils are attentive, well behaved and enthusiastic because teachers make learning interesting. As a result, pupils work hard and make good progress because they enjoy the challenging activities they are provided with. As one pupil commented during a well-taught Year 5 mathematics lesson, 'Lessons are really nice!'

However, samples of pupils' work show that teaching does not always cater for pupils' individual needs and abilities. In these instances pupils do not always make enough progress.

The quality of teachers' marking, whilst displaying some recent improvement, does not consistently identify the things pupils need to do to improve their work. When helpful comments are made there is insufficient rigour in ensuring that pupils follow the advice accurately, for example, in correcting spelling.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's curriculum is satisfactory. The emphasis on promoting speaking and listening is increasing pupils' confidence and involvement in learning. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are developed satisfactorily in other subjects. The curriculum for children of reception age is satisfactory overall.

A rich range of out-of-school activities enhances pupils' learning. Pupils proudly and successfully participate in many inter-school sporting competitions. They look forward to visitors coming to the school, whilst visits to places of interest bring their learning alive.

However, whilst the school judges its curriculum to be good, inspectors judge it as satisfactory because recent improvements and initiatives are only just beginning to have an impact on pupils' achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good levels of care and support and satisfactory guidance. Pupils feel safe and happy and are confident that their problems and concerns will be dealt with effectively by staff. Procedures for child protection, dealing with risks and with health and safety are securely in place. As a result of the good work done by the school to improve behaviour, the number of occasions on which pupils need to be excluded has dropped.

Personal, social and health education are well promoted through opportunities given to pupils to discuss and share ideas about the issues affecting their daily lives. Pupils who have challenging behaviour benefit from an effective programme of support which helps them to become better at coping with difficult situations. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy belonging to their 'House' and are keen to win 'House-points' by doing their best work and behaving well.

Procedures for checking pupils' progress are satisfactory but the information gained is not always used sufficiently by teachers in their planning. The school's well-conceived target setting is new and still developing but shows promise for the future. The targets agreed reflect a good level of challenge.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has high aspirations and a clear sense of purpose. She has ensured that staff are beginning to work as a team with a shared ethos. Through her dedication she has successfully improved pupils' behaviour and made the school a welcoming place. As a result, standards are starting to improve and pupils have good attitudes to learning.

The school currently makes suitable provision to evaluate its own performance and ensures parental involvement through regular newsletters and questionnaires. However, aspects of this evaluation need to be focused more precisely. For example, the school has correctly identified the need to improve teaching if standards are to rise. The quality of lessons is now monitored regularly. However, this monitoring is not precise enough and does not give teachers a clear understanding of how they can improve their work.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They help to ensure the proper allocation of finances and play a full part in formulating plans for further improvement.

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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?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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	NA	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	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	3	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	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 for making us feel very welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed coming into your lessons and looking at your work. We especially enjoyed talking to some of you about your school.

Here are some of the things we like about your school.

- We were impressed by how friendly you were and how much you enjoy being in school.
- Your behaviour is good and you get on with each other well.
- The school takes good care of you.
- Your headteacher is working hard to make your school a really good place to be and one which helps you to do well.

However, we think your headteacher and teachers can do some things to make your school even better:

- We have asked them to improve the quality of teaching, especially in the Reception classes and in Year 3 to Year 5, in order to raise the standards you achieve.
- We have asked your teachers to make sure that they give you a better idea of how to improve your work.
- Finally, we have asked them to improve how they check the quality of teaching so that teachers have a clearer understanding of how to improve your lessons.

Both myself and the other inspectors wish you the very best for your future