



Wilkes Green Infant School (NC)

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103308
Local Authority Birmingham
Inspection number 286625
Inspection dates 6–7 December 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Edwards

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

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Type of school | Infant | School address | Antrobus Road |
| School category | Community | | Handsworth |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 | | Birmingham B21 9NT |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 0121 5541104 |
| Number on roll (school) | 338 | Fax number | 0121 5154429 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Tonia Clarke |
| | | Headteacher | Gerald Paisley |
| Date of previous school inspection | 29 October 2001 | | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wilkes Green is a large infant school serving an area of significant deprivation. Almost half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. Pupils come from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds and just over 60% are learning English as an additional language. When children enter the Nursery class, their skills are well below expected levels for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wilkes Green is a good school that has made significant strides since the previous inspection and demonstrates good capacity to become even better. A significant strength of the school is the way in which all pupils are treated with fairness and respect, enabling all pupils to do as well as they should. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, and relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Parents are overwhelmingly delighted with the quality of education provided for their children. The comments of one parent were indicative of many others received during the inspection when she wrote, 'My children have been well cared for and are making great progress. All members of staff have been friendly and approachable.'

Children receive a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They achieve well and attain the standards expected for their age. There is an effective emphasis on building the children's confidence, and this encourages them to tackle the wide range of learning opportunities with enthusiasm. Teaching is consistently good throughout the school. As a result, pupils achieve well and standards in the key areas of English and mathematics are above average by the end of Year 2. Over the last four years, results from national tests have been significantly above the national average. Another reason the pupils do so well is the high quality of support for those pupils at an early stage of learning English. Early, and very effective intervention by the staff, ensures these pupils make quite rapid gains in their acquisition of English and this enables them to participate fully in all aspects of the curriculum.

Pupils enjoy school because the teaching is good and the good curriculum provides them with interesting and exciting activities to undertake. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils behave well and are keen to take part in all aspects of school and community life. Their involvement in growing vegetables in local allotments provides them with a good understanding of the origins of some of the healthy foods they eat. Pupils are keen to take part in the good range of physical and sporting activities the school provides. Pupils would like more opportunities to put forward their views about what is happening, and the school recognises the benefits of providing the pupils with a forum for doing so. The care, guidance and support provided are good. Pupils are looked after well and those with learning difficulties are provided with good support, enabling them to learn well.

Leadership and management are good. There is a clear focus on raising standards and ensuring all pupils, no matter what their ability, do as well as they can. Racial harmony within the school is outstanding and this is due in part to the school's effective policy of training and employing staff from a wide range of backgrounds and encouraging them to contribute fully to the life of the school. This is one of the reasons why there has been such a significant improvement in the support provided for those pupils learning English as an additional language. The school's tracking of pupils' progress is detailed but cumbersome. The leadership recognises the need to make it more easily accessible and user friendly to ensure they are able to react more quickly to identify trends in pupils' performance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the processes by which senior staff track the progress of pupils, enabling the school to react more easily to trends in performance.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to influence what is happening in school by surveying their views more rigorously and through setting up a more formal structure for sampling their opinions.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The above average standards attained in national tests over the last four years at the end of Year 2 show that pupils achieve well. There has been a steady improvement in all aspects of literacy and numeracy, but improvements have been more significant in writing because the school has rightly focused on this aspect. Basic skills continue to improve. The pupils' speaking skills improve rapidly because teachers are skilled at encouraging them to respond fully to their questioning. Pupils learning English as an additional language progress very well in their acquisition of English because teachers and bilingual staff provide them with very good support.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well in all areas of learning. They do well to attain the skills that are expected for their age on entry to Year 1.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils' good behaviour plays a significant part in their good achievement and learning. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay fit, healthy and safe. This is evident during school playtime where pupils of all ages play together safely and happily. Pupils enjoy a very wide range of cultural experiences which significantly enhance their enthusiasm for school. Their participation in a good range of musical, dramatic and artistic activities is good. Good literacy and numeracy skills, together with developing self-confidence prepares the pupils well for the future. Attendance, which is now satisfactory, continues to improve and the school is doing all it can to improve it further. A small number of families take extended holidays during term-time, resulting in a higher than average level of unauthorised absence. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and know to whom they should turn if they are having problems. They do say, however, that they do not know how they can make their views about school known. The school recognises the importance of providing opportunities for pupils to be heard and for their views to be acted upon where appropriate.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and this results in pupils of all abilities learning well. The foundation laid in the Nursery and Reception classes is very secure. Children are very keen to learn because teachers provide them with a wide range of stimulating and interesting activities. The teachers make very good use of interactive whiteboards to motivate the pupils. Throughout the school, teachers plan lessons well. They make good use of assessment information to plan work that caters for pupils' differing abilities and levels of maturity. Behaviour is never an issue because teachers have high expectations of pupils. There are good examples of marking where teachers clearly identify what pupils need to do to improve but the practice is not consistent. Not all teachers are making the best use of marking to link pupils' work to the targets they have been set for improvement.

Teaching assistants provide very good support for those pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The skill of these staff, together with well timed withdrawal sessions, ensures these pupils make rapid progress in learning English and keep up with their classmates in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is successful in meeting the needs of the school's very diverse community. From the Nursery class onwards, the teachers place an emphasis on the development of the basic skills that children will need to practice. Staff have built up a good level of expertise that helps them to provide a good range of activities to support the significant number of children with little or no English who arrive in the school. There are good opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills through the teaching of all subjects. The use of computers to support learning in other subjects is not as well developed although it is satisfactory and improving. Opportunities for the pupils' personal, social and health education are good. There are good links with secondary schools and these are used effectively to promote learning by gifted and talented pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about the multicultural nature of British society with visitors, such as a group of travelling Zulus, enhancing the multicultural aspect of the curriculum. Visitors such as these and a good range of visits add significantly to the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are rightly very happy with the way their children are well cared for and supported. The school does all it can to ensure pupils are safe and secure. Procedures for child protection and for vetting staff are fully in place, and risk assessments are rigorous. There are good links with external agencies which help to ensure that pupils

with learning difficulties are well supported. Through necessity, the school has developed an internal structure that is effective in supporting the very diverse range of language and cultural backgrounds of its pupils. Teaching assistants contribute well to the success of the school in this aspect. Learning mentors also make a significant contribution to supporting pupils. They have been particularly helpful in improving the level of attendance. The involvement of pupils in assessing their own work is in its infancy and the school recognises that as this improves it will help them develop a greater understanding of how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's policy of supporting, training and employing staff from within the community is very effective. As a result, the diverse cultural needs are met successfully by skilled staff who have a good understanding of the backgrounds of the pupils. There is regular and effective monitoring of the quality of teaching, and this has helped to maintain the good quality of education. The leadership has a very clear understanding of what the school does well and what could be improved. Information about pupils' progress is detailed and informative. However, it is not easily accessible to all staff and trends in pupils' performance are difficult to identify at an early stage. The school accepts the importance of making it more 'user friendly' so that it can be more reactive to trends. Links with parents are good and questionnaires returned prior to the inspection remarked on the good relationships between school and home. Staff are working hard to ensure the improvement in standards, seen over the last few years, are maintained.

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Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
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Overall effectiveness

| | |
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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. Those in charge of the school are making sure it provides you with a good education.

Here are some of the highlights

- You do well in your reading, writing and mathematics.
- You are provided with many interesting activities to do.
- You behave well and enjoy your lessons and other activities.
- You get on very well with one another and with the staff who provide you with good teaching.
- Adults look after you well and keep you safe.
- You are developing a good understanding of how to keep yourselves healthy and safe.

These are the things we have asked the school to do now

- Improve the way in which it keeps a track of how well you are all doing in your work.
- Provide you with more opportunities to talk about what you like in school and what you would like to see improved.

I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your time at school.