



Wilson Stuart School and Sports College

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 103612
Local Authority Birmingham
Inspection number 286705
Inspection date 2 October 2006
Reporting inspector Patricia Potheary

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Perry Common Road
School category	Community		Erdington
Age range of pupils	2-19		Birmingham B23 7AT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 3734475
Number on roll (school)	133	Fax number	0121 3739842
Number on roll (6th form)	17	Chair	Steve Abbott
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Anne Tomkinson
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2001		

Age group 2-19	Inspection date 2 October 2006	Inspection number 286705
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Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wilson Stuart is a large special school for pupils with physical disability. Many pupils have additional learning difficulties or complex medical needs. The sixth form is based at a local college. Less than half of pupils are from White British backgrounds and the rest are from other ethnic origins, mainly Asian. Three pupils receive support for English as an additional language. Pupils come from a wide mix of social backgrounds with relatively high levels of deprivation. The school has specialist sports college status and runs a community outreach service. There is an increase in pupils with severe learning difficulties coming into the school and twelve are currently on roll.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Wilson Stuart is an outstanding school in every respect. From Foundation Stage to the sixth form, pupils thrive personally and academically. Parents are very pleased indeed with the school, several describing it as 'brilliant'. Pupils greatly enjoy their lessons, and think they are the best part of school. The school is highly specialised in several ways and has a clutch of awards to recognise the high quality of its work. The specialist sports status has led to greatly improved facilities and raised standards, not just in physical education, but also in pupils' qualifications and achievements generally.

Many pupils benefit from expert help to enable them to communicate through signs, symbols and state of the art electronic devices. Training to increase pupils' mobility and improve their independence, alongside their increasing skills in communicating, ensures that they are able to make the most of their lessons and achieve well above the levels expected in similar schools. Although standards are below average compared to all schools, a large number of pupils make outstanding progress. Teaching in all age groups, including the Nursery, is outstanding and, because of this, pupils learn much more than would ordinarily be expected. Teachers plan in great detail to ensure that each and every pupil is learning in the way that suits them best.

With the exception of information and communication technology (ICT), where progress is satisfactory for those aged 11 to 16, pupils make at least good, and often very good, progress in all other subjects and courses, with clearly outstanding progress in science, design and technology, physical education and French. Results from pupils' tests and qualifications have improved year on year, largely because the leadership team and staff will settle for nothing but the best. They diligently explore every area of the school's operation and constantly strive to keep improving what is on offer and what is achieved. The result is happy, very well cared for pupils, who behave exceptionally well, do everything they can to stay healthy and keep each other safe, and are prepared in the best possible way for their future.

Pupils make a significant contribution to the school and community, especially through the school council. The inclusion of pupils in local and national activities, and in mainstream classes where possible, is a major strength of the school, demonstrated by their Leading Aspect Award for inclusion in 2004.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Post-16 provision is excellent. Students are well integrated into the local further education college where they are based. The college has very good resources, yet students also have the backup of specialist staff from the school. Students can take full advantage of their abilities because they have access to all the college facilities. Students say how much they enjoy being at college and making new friends. High quality care and guidance, coupled with an interesting and challenging range of courses, ensures that students make outstanding progress in their personal development, in achieving examination success and in preparing for their future work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in ICT for pupils aged 11 to 16.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Pupils achieve very well and make exceptional progress at Wilson Stuart, although standards are below national averages because many pupils have additional learning and medical difficulties. This exceptional progress holds true for all age and ability groups, for girls and boys equally and in almost every subject and course on offer. The Nursery, Reception and sixth form are no exception. It is only in ICT where progress, although good for pupils aged 4 to 11, is satisfactory for those aged 11 to 16. The school has identified this as an area to be developed and progress in ICT lessons is already improving for the older pupils. Older pupils and students achieve many different qualifications. From last year, they have the opportunity to gain sports coaching awards and several are working towards nationally recognised accreditation in skills for working life in sports and recreation. More pupils are now taking the higher level GCSE qualification in mathematics and science, because of the significant progress they make between the ages of 11 and 14. A high proportion of pupils exceed their quite challenging targets in most areas.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding because there is such a wide range of opportunities to help them shine and follow their interests. As a result, pupils quickly improve their confidence and self-esteem. They really enjoy school. One parent, typical of many, reported that her daughter 'has never been happier or better educated at any other school'. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils and students are polite, caring and safe with each other and one said that he likes 'working hard in lessons' best of all. They are willing and confident to engage in conversation with visitors, often through communication aids, which they are adept at using. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of pupils is also excellent. Pupils themselves suggested raising money for Kashmir and one of the new huts there now has the school name on the outside. Pupils and students value the sporting opportunities and fully understand what to do to keep healthy. Through projects, charitable work and by voting in the school council, pupils and students are able to make a very valuable contribution. For example, school council members report to the governing body and several pupils represent the school at national events and meetings. These all add to the many skills they develop to secure a successful future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Many lessons are outstanding, partly because teachers make them so enjoyable. The fact that 'staff have a sense of humour' impresses one Year 11 pupil. Lessons are very well organised so that each and every pupil knows exactly what they have to do to make progress. Lively presentation and a host of interesting activities make sure that pupils want to learn and work hard, which they certainly do. The school is nationally recognised for its use of technology to help pupils and students do their best, and interactive whiteboards and communication aids are managed expertly in lessons so that everyone can take part and achieve equally well. The teaching of ICT in the secondary department has recently been improved but it still does not reach the high quality demonstrated in other subjects. Teachers and teaching assistants always seek to improve practice, and the skills needed for teaching those with more complex needs in the junior department are developing well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

A high quality, continually improving, curriculum makes a significant contribution to the very good learning taking place. Every element, from qualifications, basic skills and enterprise through to extra activities, is carefully thought through so that pupils have a choice of something they enjoy and aspire to achieve. The high quality of provision is evident in the large number of curriculum awards, from the Sportsmark Gold with distinction to a languages award, or from the Artsmark through to Healthy Schools. The school takes advantage of whatever is on offer and has developed strong links with local and national organisations. The wealth of clubs, visits and performances ensure that the learning in lessons is enriched and supported exceptionally well. Pupils say how much they gain from their residential trips. As one pupil explained, 'We have abilities, not just disabilities', and it is this attitude that the curriculum fosters so well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The outstanding care, guidance and support provided for pupils are described eloquently by one parent who wrote that her son is 'looked after and cared for like I would, if I were looking after him myself'. Pupils are kept very safe and grow in confidence. Pupils' independence, personal and health needs are carefully supported by a multi-disciplinary team, which encourages them to play their full part in every aspect of school life. Staff know just how well each pupil is doing and the new

assessment system allows staff to review pupils' progress at very regular intervals. This means that high standards can be maintained and pupils not reaching their targets can be given extra support as soon as possible. The comprehensive guidance given to pupils and students and the skills they achieve in school are having a very positive impact on their future work and social lives after they leave. Parents are given very good opportunities to support their child's development at school, but many do not take advantage of the links on offer. The school is developing a system to help overcome this through the Internet.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The leadership and management required to maintain and improve such outstanding provision over many years is exceptional. The leadership team, expertly led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, is not complacent, however. The leaders have set up robust systems for evaluating every aspect of the school's performance and they constantly seek to improve what is on offer and how well pupils do. As a result, year on year, the results improve substantially. There is very good capacity to continue improving. The governing body very effectively oversees the procedures and results to ensure that the high quality is maintained. The school's specialist status has involved the school in far greater links with the community and a brand new sports hall is now available for community use. Many schools share expertise with the staff and outreach team and the school has a stream of visitors who come to see high quality practice, from the teaching in physical education to the sophisticated aids to communication. To quote one visitor in the visitor book, 'What a wonderful inspiring school.'

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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?	1	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	1
The attendance of learners	1	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	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 for being so welcoming to us when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you very much, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons.

We found your school to be highly successful, very well run and caring. It is an excellent school, just like many of you told us it was. It helps all of you to make exceptionally good progress. School leaders do an outstanding job in seeing that the school maintains such high quality work. You are sensible, hard working and behave extremely well. Your teachers and teaching assistants are very skilled at helping you to do your best and they teach you very well. We think that you could be helped to make even better progress in ICT and have asked your teachers to find ways to do this. Your understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues is excellent and you clearly enjoy school.

We were pleased to see all the good sport that you play and the fruit and vegetables that you eat to try and keep healthy. You work and play very well together and we think that this, alongside your very good skills in discussion, in literacy and numeracy and for working life, will stand you in very good stead for the future. Your teachers see to it that you have an excellent range of activities and links to other schools to help you learn well and improve many of your skills. We are really impressed with the new sports hall and your excellent physical education. The school is very good at keeping you safe, at helping you to become well-rounded people, in guiding you in reaching your targets and in making sure you are exceptionally well prepared for your future lives. You clearly play a vital part in the success of the school.

We wish you all the very best in the future.

Yours sincerely Lead Inspector