



New Invention Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104187
Local Authority Walsall
Inspection number 286873
Inspection date 30 January 2007
Reporting inspector Barbara Crane

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Cannock Road
School category	Community		New Invention
Age range of pupils	3-7		Willenhall WV12 5SA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01922 710871
Number on roll (school)	333	Fax number	01922 491094
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Lyn Staffiere
		Headteacher	Catherine Travis
Date of previous school inspection	3 December 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a large infant school with a Nursery. The take-up of free school meals is lower than average even though the school serves an area in which some families face challenging circumstances. Children's skills when they start school are slightly below average and lower than this in language. About a sixth of the pupils are learning English as an additional language and about half of these pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. There is a slightly below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Parents rightly hold it in high regard and work very well in partnership with the staff. Children flourish and their achievement is excellent because the staff put them first. The Nursery and Reception children get a first-rate start to their education. They are welcomed into a lively environment where they can explore, use their initiative and test out what they have learned. Most go beyond the goals in learning set for their age by the time they start in Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are equally well prepared for the future, their achievement is outstanding and standards are high by the time they leave the school. Pupils come in at the start of the day eager to learn new things and to be with their friends. Their personal development and well-being are outstanding as a result of the high quality care, guidance and support provided by the staff. The pupils very capably put into practice what they learn about keeping active, eating healthily and keeping safe. The staff listen to pupils' views and ideas and act on them. Consequently, pupils make a difference to their community and help it to improve.

There is outstanding teaching for all ages. Teachers plan an excellent curriculum and know how to teach it so that it fosters pupils' love of learning and very rapid progress. Exciting activities in lessons foster pupils' interest and visits and visitors provide first-hand experiences that stimulate pupils' ideas. The staff are quick to identify what individuals need to boost their skills and gain confidence. Extra support is precisely based on assessments, and fast intervention means that pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make outstanding progress. This is also true of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, who make equal progress to their peers. Improving pupils' skills in writing has been a major focus for the school and it has been very successful. Pupils' progress in writing is very rapid and they use their skills very well in other subjects. Pupils who are very capable readers are highly challenged in most ways, but a few opportunities are missed for them to fully extend their skills through reading in other subjects.

There is outstanding leadership and management at all levels. The headteacher leads a talented staff who embrace initiatives enthusiastically. Her vision of including all children and getting the best for them is fully shared by the staff and governors. Excellent self-evaluation is built into the school's everyday way of working. The thorough checks on what is happening in classrooms and the analysis of pupils' progress give the school a clear view of its effectiveness. As a result, everyone knows what is working well and where improvements are needed. Action to resolve any areas of weakness is swift and effective.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils use their skills in reading in other subjects so that they make the best possible progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

By the end of the Reception Year, most children exceed the goals set for their age in all areas of learning. This picture of excellent achievement provides children with a very firm foundation for their future learning and life outside school. Children who are learning English as an additional language do as well as their classmates because their particular needs are recognised and catered for in teaching. This rapid progress continues for all groups of pupils in Years 1 and 2. Standards in 2006 were well above average, with outstanding performance in writing. The most recent assessments of Year 2 pupils show that standards in all areas are set to rise even further this year. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make excellent progress towards their targets because of outstanding teaching. Very few pupils do not reach the level expected for their age by the time they leave the school. Whilst progress in reading is good for more able children, it is not as rapid as writing and a few do not do their very best. This is because they are not always given sufficient opportunity to further develop their skills in other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They behave very well and their attendance is good. Relationships between different ethnic groups are excellent. Right from the start, children in the Nursery learn the benefits of working and playing together, and this continues as they grow. Pupils willingly help each other and share ideas so that they are in control of their learning. They meet with such a good degree of success that their confidence quickly expands. Pupils work enthusiastically to improve their school community because they see the difference that they can make. The School Council, for example, gathered other pupils' ideas about how to improve the playground that were then incorporated into the final designs. Pupils act as 'buddies' on the playground to help others join in games. Pupils are active and know how to keep safe in work and play. They make full use of the exciting outdoor areas and enjoy activities such as 'Shake and Wake' that help them to, as one pupil put it 'get out of breath and keep me fit'. Children know how to eat healthily. Nursery children prepare healthy sandwiches for 'patients' in the hospital role-play area and are eager to sample the results.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes develop a thirst for learning because outstanding teaching gives them exactly what they need to build basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), as well as developing

a high level of independence. As in all parts of the school, teachers identify the key vocabulary that children need to learn and plan exciting activities through which they can practise using their new vocabulary. This supports the progress of children who are learning English as an additional language very well. Warm relationships underpin the calm atmosphere in classrooms. Teaching for all ages makes precise use of thorough assessment to pinpoint the next small steps in pupils' learning. This means that work is adapted very well for different abilities. Teaching for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is very well organised to focus on specific targets and ensures their excellent progress. Teaching assistants know exactly how to support these pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Senior managers rightly describe the curriculum as 'a labour of love'. Imaginative planning supports teaching and promotes pupils' enjoyment of school and rate of learning. Planning for pupils' personal and social development is woven most effectively into lessons and activities. The topic-based curriculum is exciting and includes visits to museums, art galleries and dance festivals. Year 2 pupils' writing about pirates benefited from a visit from 'Blackbeard'. Excellent use is made of the outstanding facilities outdoors for exploring ideas and using initiative. Reception children, for example, built shelters for animals after hearing the story of Percy the Park Keeper. Teachers use ICT very well to engage pupils' interest and pupils use computers confidently. Excellent opportunities are planned for pupils to use their skills in writing in topics. A few opportunities are missed to extend more able pupils' skills by reading around topics. Many pupils join in enthusiastically in extra activities in sport, music and drama.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's care for the pupils makes a significant contribution to their feeling of security and well-being. Everything necessary to safeguard children is done. Procedures for protecting children are robust and effective. Pupils know whom to turn to if they have any difficulties. The staff know the pupils well and give them the support and guidance they need. This includes pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Pupils' individual progress is tracked carefully and specific targets are set for improvement. Older pupils describe their targets as 'something you want to get to' and are confident that help will be given to reach them. The support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well organised and works extremely well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school is resolute in its pursuit of excellence. It sets challenging targets for pupils and has an excellent track record of meeting them. This is because the commitment to getting the best from staff and pupils is at the hub of the school leaders' and

managers' work. The senior managers set the tone here and will not settle for second best. The excellent monitoring of teaching and analysis of data are used to identify the right priorities for improvement. These are worked on diligently and checked thoroughly to see if improvement has been made. The school's outstanding capacity for improvement is seen in its successful drive to raise achievement in writing. It has also ensured that the progress of pupils who are learning English as an additional language matches that of others, which was a weaker area in the previous inspection findings. Governors are excellent 'critical friends' who ask challenging questions that help the school to reflect on its decisions. The school's partnership with parents and its other significant partners is outstanding. Parents appreciate the welcoming atmosphere of the school and the guidance they receive in helping their children's learning at home. They express a high level of confidence in the school and the overwhelming majority are delighted with what it provides for their children.

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Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	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
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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 for helping me with my work when I visited recently. I enjoyed meeting you and talking with you. I am glad that you go to an excellent school and I can understand why you enjoy it so much. The grown-ups work hard to make it bright and welcoming for you and your parents. This is what I found out about your school:

- You do very well in your work and reach high standards because of excellent teaching
- There are so many exciting things for you to do in your topics that keep you interested
- Your behaviour is very good. You are sensible and like helping each other
- Everyone gets on together well and you are quick to help each other
- You know which healthy food to eat and enjoy 'Shake and Wake' to keep you fit and alert!
- The grown-ups take very good care of you, listen to your problems and give you extra help if you need it
- The people who are in charge of your school make sure that it runs well. They know what they need to do to get the best for you all.

I noticed how good you are at writing about things in your topics. This is because you have such good ideas and you learn so much from the visitors to school and the trips you go on. So that you can do your absolute best in your reading, I have asked your teachers to make sure that you read more about the things to do with your topics.

Your teachers and parents are right to be proud of you. Keep having fun and working hard.