



Wodensfield Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104345
Local Authority Wolverhampton
Inspection number 286914
Inspection dates 9–10 October 2006
Reporting inspector David Biltcliffe

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Woden Avenue
School category	Community		Wednesfield
Age range of pupils	3–11		Wolverhampton WV11 1PW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 556350
Number on roll (school)	462	Fax number	01902 556351
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	K Mullinder
		Headteacher	J Harriman
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is about twice the size of the typical primary school. Pupils' attainment on entry to the Nursery is slightly below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is lower than usual. Four-fifths of pupils are of White British origin; the school has nine pupils at an early stage of learning English. The headteacher has been in post since 1988.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. It does many things well and has just a few weaknesses. It has made steady progress since its last inspection, under the committed and much-appreciated leadership of its long-standing headteacher. It is a very caring school that is determined to build on its strengths and sort out its few weaknesses. Parents have a high regard for what the school does for their children: 'fantastic', 'really good' and 'very impressed' were typical compliments relayed to inspectors.

The school is strong in the way it cares for pupils and educates them to be good citizens, giving sensitive, effective attention to their personal development. Pupils are polite, chatty and friendly, and behave well. They feel safe and enjoy the breadth of extra-curricular activities provided for them. They exercise sensibly and most eat healthily. The school does a good job in helping them to be responsible citizens, preparing them soundly for their future lives. It is a calm, purposeful and happy place. Attendance is good. These important features indicate the solid foundations laid by the school and the highly valued contribution it makes to pupils' all-round development.

The standard of work is average throughout the school. This represents a reasonable, steady rate of progress for most pupils, including those who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) is strong. The main weaknesses lies in the fact that higher-ability pupils do not quite achieve as well as they should in writing and mathematics.

The good features of the school stem from the caring, purposeful climate created by the headteacher and her staff, with the result that pupils enjoy school. In many lessons, their enjoyment is enhanced by teaching that is well organised, stimulating and pacy, reflecting in practice the intentions of carefully structured school policies.

In contrast, progress and achievement are not as good as they could be. In some lessons, there is insufficient depth in teachers' questions and in pupils' assessment and discussion of information and ideas. This particularly restricts the progress of higher-ability pupils. Secondly, the school's management and governors do not have strong enough ways of evaluating pupils' achievement across all year groups, with the result that weaknesses are not always spotted and corrected quickly enough.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, with some very good features. They have secured a high level of pupil care and are steadily concentrating on raising standards. In 2006, the school reached its modest targets, except in mathematics. The school's management is capable of securing the necessary further lift in standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Bring all learning up to a good standard by ensuring that teachers' questions are sufficiently probing and that pupils have adequate opportunities to examine information and ideas in depth.

- Ensure that higher-ability pupils are adequately extended, particularly in mathematics and writing, by giving them more searching and stimulating work.
- Assess pupils' academic achievement more precisely across all year groups to ensure that any weaknesses detected are promptly addressed.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are average and pupils' achievement is, in nearly all respects, satisfactory. By the time pupils leave Year 6, most of their work is of average standard, indicating steady, positive progress during their time in school.

As a result of fine teaching, pupils in the Foundation Stage make good progress. By the end of Reception, most reach the nationally expected levels of development. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average, showing that most pupils make satisfactory progress. Slightly fewer pupils than is the case nationally, however, reach the higher Level 3 standard, especially in writing.

By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are average overall, representing satisfactory achievement. In English, mathematics and science, for example, at least the usual proportions of pupils reach the basic Level 4 standard. Not as many pupils as should do, however, reach the higher Level 5 standard in writing and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those for whom English is a new language make sound progress because of the good support they receive.

The school has rightly recognised that the shortfalls in writing and mathematics are priority areas for improvement. In a few cases, work set for pupils is not sufficiently challenging and progress is not tracked precisely enough, with the result that the learning of higher-ability pupils in particular is not always as good as it should be. In 2006, the school exceeded the modest targets it had set itself in the Year 6 national tests in English, but did not reach one of its two mathematics targets. Current targets for 2007 are similarly modest. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are capable of reaching standards of work by the time they leave Year 6 that at least reach national patterns.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good, a strength highly valued by parents. Pupils are polite, showing respect for themselves and one another. They enjoy their work, take pride in their school and want to succeed. Their attendance and punctuality are good. In most classes, pupils have satisfactory opportunities to work independently. Pupils readily take on responsibility and contribute much to the life of the school, particularly through their involvement in the school council. Teachers and learning assistants provide exceptionally good role models.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development is good. Assemblies, for example, give significant opportunities for spiritual reflection. Pupils have a wide

knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities take a full part in all aspects of school life. Many pupils choose to eat healthily and take full advantage of the school's good provision for exercise and sport. Pupils act sensibly and safely in and around the school. They are well prepared for their future lives and make a very good contribution to their wider community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. A significant proportion of teaching is good and a small amount is excellent. Most lessons are carefully structured and conducted at a reasonable pace. Most teachers take care to build patiently on what pupils know and can do. They have a good understanding of pupils' individual needs. In the best lessons, pupils work hard on tasks that substantially but realistically challenge their thinking.

The main weaknesses are in mathematics and writing, where some pupils, and especially those of higher ability, do not make as much progress as they could. This is usually because the work is not stimulating or probing enough, with the result that pupils do not have to think about and discuss things together in sufficient depth. Throughout the school, teaching assistants give very effective support in literacy and numeracy to those who find learning difficult or who are at an early stage of learning English.

Assessment procedures for checking how well pupils are doing in English and mathematics are satisfactory. Suitable targets are set, but assessment is not always sufficiently frequent or precise to enable the more able pupils to reach the required national standards. Marking is regular, but does not always give pupils or their parents guidance on how work can be improved. The monitoring of lessons by senior management is rigorous and accurate, even if the results of it do not always quickly secure the raising of pupils' achievement. Homework is used appropriately to reinforce and extend pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Appropriate time and priority are given to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy. Thoughtful links across the curriculum enable pupils to practise and enhance their linguistic skills in most lessons.

The range of out-of-school activities is outstanding. The 24 lunchtime and afternoon clubs, in addition to the daily after-school club, greatly enrich pupils' enjoyment and learning, and are highly valued by pupils and parents. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of visits, visitors, community links and themed events. Year 6 pupils, for instance, recall with pleasure their introductory residential visit in Year 2 and look forward to their week of outdoor pursuits at Barmouth. All these experiences contribute

significantly to pupils' understanding of the importance of safe and healthy lifestyles and prepare them well for their future lives.

Strong links with neighbouring secondary schools enable older pupils to gain solid experience of engineering, dance and French and further their understanding of economic issues. The school's commitment to creativity in all areas of the curriculum further broadens pupils' horizons and learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Relationships between adults and pupils are extremely good, with the result that pupils feel very secure in school. Parents and carers are very happy with the support and guidance their children receive. In the Foundation Stage, new children to the school are carefully introduced to the routines of school life. The welcoming, secure and stimulating environment which they enter contributes significantly to the success of their early learning and independence.

The school liaises closely with a range of outside agencies to ensure high levels of care and support for all pupils, including those most at risk. Systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' academic achievement require strengthening to identify precisely where additional support may be needed. Pupils' health, safety and protection are high priorities and rigorously safeguarded. Pupils express confidence that they always have an adult to talk to about any worries.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory overall, but with significant strengths. Senior management has created a climate where all staff are highly committed to the well-being of all pupils and where pupils find pleasure in being at school. This substantial success and the committed energy of the headteacher in particular are greatly appreciated by parents.

In contrast, despite considerable efforts and some current signs of improvement, success in raising achievement in writing and mathematics, especially for pupils of higher ability, has been slow. The governors show good support for the school; they have been less successful in ensuring that some shortcomings in pupils' attainment have been quickly and effectively addressed. The leadership and management of subjects are satisfactory overall. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

The school's tracking and analysis of individual pupils' standards are detailed. Reviews of data at whole-school level, however, do not always extract key factors that can quickly underpin and secure further improvement. The overall soundness of leadership and management, coupled with their great success in many important aspects of school life, indicates that managers have both the will and the capacity to increase the school's recent steady improvement.

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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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

As you know, inspectors recently visited your school to see how well it is doing. We should like to thank you all very much for telling us what you think and making us very welcome.

? Overall, we think that your school gives you a satisfactory education and a sound start in life.

? We found many good things:

- You get a good start in school from the Nursery.
- You pay attention to your teachers and work hard.
- You attend well and really enjoy coming to school.
- You behave well in class and around school.
- Your teachers look after you very well and make you feel safe.
- You have a lot of interesting things to do outside lessons.

? There are also just a few things that need to be better. Please do all you can to help your teachers to sort them out:

- You need more opportunities to think about and discuss your views thoroughly in class.
- Some of you, especially those of you who are already doing quite well, can reach higher standards in writing and mathematics.
- Your teachers need clearer information about how well you are doing.

We are glad you enjoy going to school and send you our best wishes for the future.

David Biltcliffe

David Biltcliffe Lead inspector