



Wath Central Primary

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106893
Local Authority Rotherham
Inspection number 287640
Inspection dates 1–2 November 2006
Reporting inspector Dee Brigstock

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Fitzwilliam Street
School category	Community		Wath-upon-Dearne, Rotherham
Age range of pupils	3–11		South Yorkshire S63 7HG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01709 760345
Number on roll (school)	447	Fax number	01709 874971
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	K Kelly
		Headteacher	Mrs G Waddington
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

In September 2005 a local infant school was closed and the junior school was extended to include its pupils. The school was then renamed Wath Central Primary School. It is a large school situated in an area of below average prosperity where there are pockets of significant deprivation. Despite this, the school has a below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils with a statement of educational need is average. When children start school their skills and knowledge are below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage with very few at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, which gives satisfactory value for money. It has a good capacity to improve further. Despite the upheaval of major building work, the addition of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and a significant increase in staffing, the headteacher and her deputy have successfully raised standards since the last inspection, through improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, they have increased the progress of both lower-attaining and of higher-attaining pupils. From a below average attainment on entry to school, standards in English, mathematics and science rise to average by Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory and improving. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also achieve satisfactorily.

Pupils' care, guidance and support are good and the school works well with external providers to promote pupils' well-being, for example in forging sporting links. The curriculum is satisfactory and has been strengthened by including an added focus on pupils' personal, social and health education. This has had a positive impact on pupils' good personal development. Pupils feel safe and secure in school, their attendance is above average and their enjoyment of learning and what the school has to offer is clear. Behaviour is good and pupils treat the new building with respect, the youngest children treasuring their new games and equipment. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Teachers plan a good range of learning activities and children happily take part in these, but the surface and design of the outdoor classroom is unsatisfactory. This is having a negative impact on the delivery of children's outdoor education.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are strengths in teaching, for example in planning lessons which meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Where teachers use assessment information in their marking to inform pupils on how to improve, pupils' progress is good. This target setting process is well established in English in Key Stage 2 but not in the recently amalgamated Key Stage 1, or in mathematics throughout the school, so pupils, parents and staff are not always aware of the next steps in pupils' learning.

Leaders have formed a new senior management team with a wider range of expertise and talents. This team has a good view of the school's development needs because the school's evaluation of itself is accurate. However, as yet, the new members of the team and governors have not had a major impact on whole-school improvement. This is because they have not taken part in school monitoring exercises which include Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils are aware of how well they are doing and what to do to improve their work, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Develop the skills of governors and senior staff in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of the outdoor classroom in the Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter the Nursery with below average standards. Overall, their achievement is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage with strengths in their personal and social development. Throughout Key Stage 1, achievement is satisfactory, and standards remain below average by the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is good. In previous years, in Key Stage 2 the progress of the most capable pupils and some of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was unsatisfactory. However, the school's sharp focus on improving the quality of teachers' planning, in particular in writing, has been successful. As a result, pupils' progress has picked up and standards are now average by Year 6. The latest test results showed more pupils achieving the standards expected for them in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress throughout the school, helped by additional and practical support from well qualified learning assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils clearly enjoy their learning, one commenting, 'I can't wait to come back to school at the end of the summer, as daft as it sounds!' Pupils feel safe and know that they can go to trusted adults to solve any problems. Adults quickly identify and meet pupils' social and personal needs. For example, at lunchtime, teaching assistants are on hand to support vulnerable pupils. The work the school is doing in improving pupils' understanding of the importance of healthy eating, exercise and staying safe is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflected in the calm and purposeful manner they go about their work. Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities: 'We feel we're trusted.' Pupils' influence in how their school is run is satisfactory; although a school council is planned, it is not yet in place. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and standards in English and mathematics prepare them satisfactorily for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Strengths include teachers' planning which clearly identifies the different levels of work set for different groups of pupils within each class. Also, teachers are using ICT well to focus pupils' learning, particularly at the beginning of lessons. Even the youngest children practise their learning using ICT programs throughout lessons. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils, who behave well. These productive relationships generate a good learning atmosphere.

Occasionally the pace of lessons slows because teachers' explanations are too long and then pupils' concentration falters.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a sound start because they have planned, interesting activities, which encourage them to learn. However, the outdoor classroom is unsatisfactory for these young children because its hard, plain surface restricts the use that teachers can make of it.

The curriculum has been adjusted successfully to provide additional personal and social education for pupils and the school is starting to identify links between subjects to make learning more relevant for pupils. For example, pupils in Year 5 were keen to write about their learning on a school visit to Conisbrough Castle. ICT skills are used increasingly to support learning in other subjects.

Links with the wider community provide additional experiences and visits, and visitors to the school widen pupils' horizons. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is not well developed, but is improving. A small number of clubs such as dance, football and drama, many led by external providers, benefit some pupils. The school has rightly identified the need to extend the range and number of extra-curricular activities it provides.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good, and successfully promote pupils' physical health and emotional well-being. Child protection procedures are in place and arrangements for health and safety are robust, ensuring that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, learn in a safe and secure learning environment. Pupils are confident and clearly enjoy their learning, as can be seen in their good attendance. One pupil said, 'We're all like a big family.' Parents overwhelmingly hold the view that pupils are well cared for, safe and secure. One parent described the school as 'thoughtful and caring', which reflected the comments of many. Pupils' guidance on how to improve further is good in English in Key Stage 2, where pupils know their targets and how to improve further. In Key Stage 1 and in mathematics, pupils are not aware of their targets and therefore do not get enough guidance on how to improve further. This is a priority in the school's own plan for improvement. Staff work well with a range of agencies to support the most vulnerable pupils and as a result their achievement is satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, supported very effectively by the deputy headteacher, leads and manages the school well. Both have played a pivotal role in establishing a shared vision and direction for the school

following its reorganisation. They have set a clear agenda for school improvement and established a strong sense of team spirit among staff so that they are all pulling in the same direction. Despite the changes that have taken place in school, including a major programme of rebuilding and refurbishment, leaders have successfully raised standards by Year 6 while maintaining a quiet, orderly learning community. Governors are supportive and share the leaders' aspirations for the school. They are involved in helping to set the school's priorities and in keeping them under review. Their work is satisfactory rather than good because they have not yet got the same level of knowledge of the performance of pupils in Key Stage 1 as they have for those in Key Stage 2.

The headteacher has extended the leadership team to include coordinators from Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage, widening the team's knowledge and experience. This extension to the team is recent, and the newly appointed senior staff have not yet taken part in whole-school monitoring activities or played a major part in evaluating the school's work and performance. As a result they do not have insight into the strengths and weaknesses of teaching throughout the school.

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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	3
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

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	3
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?	3
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	2
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

Thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and for being so helpful when we asked you questions. We enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work, and finding out about what you like to do.

We think there are lots of really good things about your school. We particularly appreciate:

- the way you behave and look after your new building
- how hard you are working to improve your writing
- how well your headteacher and the deputy headteacher have managed to keep you working hard despite all the building work that has gone on around you.

To improve your school even more, we have asked your headteacher to:

- make sure that you know your targets and what you need to do to get better in English and mathematics
- have some of your teachers visit each other in their classrooms to see how well you are doing
- make the outdoor classroom more interesting for the younger children.

We all hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Wath Central Primary School a good place to be.