



South Wootton Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121197
Local Authority NORFOLK
Inspection number 292049
Inspection dates 4–5 December 2006
Reporting inspector David Matthews

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Hall Lane
School category	Foundation		South Wootton, South Wootton
Age range of pupils	8–11		King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3JZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01553 674596
Number on roll (school)	173	Fax number	01553 673487
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Colin Williamson
		Headteacher	Mr Barry Pritt
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The majority of pupils at this slightly below average sized junior school are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very low and all pupils speak English as their main language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is similar to that found in most schools while the proportion of pupils qualifying for free school meals is below average. Pupils' attainment on entry is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

South Wootton Junior is a good, well managed school with a strong sense of community that is valued by parents, governors and adults working and helping there. Leadership and management are good and the school has a generally accurate picture of where its strengths are and what needs to improve. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above the national average and most pupils achieve well. The school's emphasis on physical education, music, art and information and communication technology (ICT) is reflected in examples of good achievement in these subjects. The school's very good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities enables them to make particularly good progress. Among parents' largely positive responses about the school, complimentary comments about how well it provides for these pupils included, 'The teacher has made a great effort to gain an understanding of my child's condition'.

The school has well-established arrangements for checking on pupils' progress, for example through tests. However, it does not organise the information gained as well as possible to see, at a glance, which pupils are doing well and which could be helped to do even better.

Because of the school's strong focus on pupils' personal development they make good progress in this area. The highly effective emphasis on enriching the excellent curriculum with an outstanding range of engaging activities makes school life vibrant. Consequently most pupils really enjoy school. The headteacher and many other adults are dedicated to making school life exciting, often by giving up their own time. As one parent wrote, 'There is a good balance between academic studies and other activities with the children actively involved in many different aspects'. Class councils enable pupils to voice their views and influence things which are important to them, the 'trim trail' being a good example of how they have influenced what the school provides. This also demonstrates pupils' highly developed understanding of keeping healthy.

Teaching is good. Teachers and support staff use their skills well to improve learning across many subjects. The school thoughtfully organises pupils into sets of similar ability for mathematics and English that help the majority of pupils to make good progress for most of the time. Just occasionally, however, teaching features work that is too easy or too hard for some pupils, and on these occasions progress slows for a time, and behaviour is not always at its usual high standard. Teachers give pupils very useful targets for what they need to learn next in English. Target setting does not yet include science and mathematics in all classes.

The school provides good value for money and has a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Match work more precisely to the capabilities of pupils in all lessons and gain a more easily accessible view of how well they are doing by making better use of the outcomes of tests and other checks on pupils' learning.

- Extend the targets and other guidance that pupils receive to help them to understand what they need to learn next.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are consistently above the national average year by year. At times and in some subjects they are well above those expected of eleven year olds. There are examples of good standards in art, music and ICT.

Given their above average standards when they join the school in Year 4, pupils make good progress and many achieve well in ICT, music, art and physical education. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make particularly good progress in relation to their capabilities because of the school's well-focused support.

In the most recent national tests overall standards were slightly lower than those in 2005. However, for these pupils' standards when they joined the school were lower than usual and there was a larger proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities. Therefore, they made at least satisfactory progress in English and better than expected progress in mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They thoroughly enjoy school and most participate wholeheartedly. They relate extremely well to staff and fellow pupils and behaviour in lessons and around school is good. By the time that they leave school, most are very mature and confident. They show this in their conscientious working habits and by striving to succeed. They are well prepared for secondary education, the world of work and for life in a multi-cultural society. Pupils are well-informed about safe and healthy lifestyles and this reflects, for example, in their enthusiastic participation in sport and willingness to cycle to school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are sensitive to things of beauty, have good insights into human emotions and act on a clear understanding of what is right. Attendance is above the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Most pupils make good progress because of the good teaching that they receive. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and mostly ensure that behaviour is good.

Lessons often move along at a brisk pace, keeping the attention of pupils well. Most teachers are very skilled at developing good relationships with pupils so that they want to respond positively and are keen to get on with their work. The school makes good use of all adults with special abilities to enhance pupils' learning. This includes parents, governors and support assistants. A specialist music teacher has a direct impact on the good progress in music for instance, and volunteers such as the caretaker make a significant contribution to the school's success in music.

Work is usually well matched to the full range of pupils' needs, particularly those with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, where this match is not as accurate as it might be, pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress and learners are not always fully engaged. Teachers make good use of resources such as interactive whiteboards to convey teaching points effectively.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils' good achievement, and the high standards that they achieve in a range of subjects, stem from the school's excellent curriculum. There is a consistent emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills throughout the curriculum. The school's strong focus on creative, aesthetic and technological subjects means that work in art, design and technology, music and ICT is firmly based on pupils learning and applying skills. A particular strength is the extent to which pupils use computers and other ICT devices to aid learning. This approach adds enormously to pupils' enjoyment and achievement across a wide range of subjects. Highly effective cross-curricular links make pupils' learning more relevant and appealing. The school enriches its excellent curriculum with an outstanding range of educational visits, visitors and special events, which bring learning to life and add much to pupils' academic and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Standards of care, guidance and support are good. Pupils thrive in the positive atmosphere that the school promotes. They feel secure because teachers and supervisory staff are attentive to their needs and readily provide guidance, especially in matters of personal development. There are secure arrangements for safeguarding pupils. They say that bullying is rare and that staff deal quickly and effectively with any incidents that occur. Checks on the suitability of staff, procedures for child protection and the management of site security are thorough. The school has introduced arrangements for tracking pupils' progress and staff set targets to help pupils improve their performance in writing. These arrangements are well-conceived but have not yet been extended to all classes in mathematics and science. Staff mark work conscientiously and speak to pupils about their work but the absence of clear targets for pupils to aim for, other than in writing and some classes in maths, detracts from the quality of the academic guidance that they receive. Staff provide good role models for pupils. A good example is the school's excellent website where ICT

capabilities have been used to very good effect thus inspiring pupils to develop skills in ICT.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Leadership is strongly focused on promoting pupils' personal development and their well-being. There is a good focus on raising standards that is mostly successful. The school has helpful systems in place to check how well pupils are doing, but these arrangements do not give the school a clear enough picture of the progress of individuals to take swift rigorous action on the rare occasions when progress is not as good as it might be. Because the school has a strong awareness of what works well and what needs to improve, it has identified that this aspect of its evaluation is not as sharp as it might be. Appropriate action has already been taken to begin the introduction of more keenly focused procedures to address this issue.

The head teacher has successfully sustained a common sense of purpose among staff and has worked hard to address the issues from the last inspection. For example there has been much improvement in the role of subject coordinators, and the school acknowledges the need to ensure that they have a clear view of how well different groups of pupils are progressing.

The school runs well on a day-to-day basis and it makes good use of outside agencies to enable most pupils to make good progress on most fronts. Governance is good. Governors are astute, well informed and measured in their decisions.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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

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

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?	1
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?	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	2
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

6 December 2006

Dear Pupils

South Wootton Junior School, Hall Lane, South Wootton, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 3JZ

Thank you for welcoming Mr Storer and me to your school. We both enjoyed our two days with you because you were friendly, helpful and polite.

We found that most of you make good progress in your work most of the time. We were delighted to see some good quality work in art, information and communication technology, physical education and music. Those of you who sometimes need extra help with your work get plenty of support and encouragement so that you make particularly good progress. Your head teacher leads the school well so that you all feel safe and secure and you are encouraged to do your best and to grow into sensible teenagers. Lots of adults help to make your school life exciting, and we were impressed by all the things you are able to do outside your normal lessons.

Your teachers regularly check how well you are doing in your work. We have suggested that they organise what they find out from these checks and tests in a way that they can quickly see which of you are making good progress and which of you might be doing even better. When they organise you into groups they try to give you work that is not too easy and not too hard, but just right. Just occasionally they set work that is not exactly right for some of you and we have asked them to see if they can make it even more precise so that more of you make good progress for more of the time. You have helpful targets in English that give you a good idea of what you need to do to improve your work. Some of you have similar targets in mathematics. We have asked the teachers if they would make more use of such targets in all classes in mathematics and in science.

Thank you again for two enjoyable days in your school. We would particularly like to say thank you to the Year 6 pupils who produced the folder on their thoughts about the inspection. One of our favourite contributions was, 'Top tips to survive an inspection: 1. Stay calm and don't panic. 2. Be yourself. 3. Have fun!'

With best wishes.

D Matthews

Lead inspector