

Lowe's Wong Anglican Methodist Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122769
Local Authority	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number	292505
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Derek Pattinson

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Julie Payne
Headteacher	Mrs Sheila Street
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002
School address	Queen Street Southwell Nottinghamshire NG25 0AA
Telephone number	01636 813 432
Fax number	01636 815 223

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Lowe's Wong is a larger than average junior school. Pupils come from infant schools in Southwell and the surrounding area. The school is joint denominational and is affiliated to both Anglican and Methodist churches. Many pupils come from advantaged homes, and have above average language, literacy and number skills when they begin in Year 3. Almost all pupils are of White British origin. There is a very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average, and so is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. The ethos of the school is based on Christian principles.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lowe's Wong Junior School is a good school which gives good value for money. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school enjoys high levels of support and confidence from parents and the community. One parent remarked that 'this is a lovely, caring and inclusive school', while another commented that her son 'enjoys every minute of his school life'. The effective leadership, the maintenance of above average standards and the good pastoral care and personal development are strong features. Pupils feel safe and behave well. Their outstanding attendance shows that they enjoy their school.

Pupils mostly achieve well. Results in 2006 were above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Standards have remained above average for the past five years, except for a dip in writing in 2005. This dip highlighted the need for writing to be given much greater emphasis and for a much more rigorous approach to checking how well pupils are doing. In particular, some pupils with learning difficulties make less progress than others. Initiatives to improve these areas are fully established and are being rigorously pursued. They are starting to prove successful in raising achievement although the impact is not yet seen consistently across all classes.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's drive, determination and high profile approach ensures that the school is well led. She is effectively supported by her deputy, whose high quality teaching sets an excellent example to others. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate. Senior leaders and managers play a developing and crucial role in monitoring the school's performance. As a result, pupils falling behind are now immediately targeted for extra help. There is a very supportive atmosphere within school and a high level of team spirit. The governors make a positive contribution to the school's work. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

Teaching and learning are good, with some outstanding. Secure relationships, effective management and high levels of care are features of all lessons. In the best lessons, time is used very effectively by enthusiastic teachers to facilitate learning and work is challenging for all children. As a result, most pupils work hard and value learning. Teaching assistants usually support pupils well, although the support for pupils with learning difficulties is not consistently good. A few lessons are only satisfactory because they are too heavily teacher directed and not brisk enough, which restricts opportunities for pupils to develop independence and initiative.

The curriculum is good. It is diverse, creative and well planned. The school is linking subjects together more systematically to help make learning even more interesting and enjoyable for pupils. The wide range of visits, visitors and after school activities helps to broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have good knowledge of the importance of healthy lifestyles and eating healthy meals. Pupils contribute well to the school community through, for example, the work of the school council. They contribute regularly to the wider community through their support of local and national charities. Pupils develop the skills and qualities which help prepare them well for their adult lives as they move through the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the new procedures for monitoring and checking pupils' progress are consistently and rigorously applied throughout the school.

- Raise the quality of all teaching and learning to the good or better practice that exists within the school to ensure that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve equally well and develop independence.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' attainment is above average when they start school. Standards achieved by those leaving the school have been above average for a number of years. In 2006 they were above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Standards in music and art are also higher than in most schools. However, in 2005 there was a sudden dip in standards in writing. This dip provided the impetus to introduce a much more rigorous approach to tracking how well pupils are doing. As a result, most pupils now achieve well and make good progress because of the mostly good teaching they receive and the regular checks made of how well they are doing. However, there are some pupils, such as those with learning difficulties, who make slower progress, especially in English. Inspection evidence clearly indicates that the school's actions are beginning to raise the achievement of these pupils to the good levels of others.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good, and as a result they acquire important life skills. Pupils feel safe and secure because the school is a happy and calm environment. Behaviour is good and pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and support assistants and this helps them to grow in confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are proud of their school and are keen to be involved in the wide range of activities. The level of attendance is outstanding. During lessons most pupils enjoy learning and work hard. However, not enough opportunity is provided for some of them to develop their skills as independent learners. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy and demonstrate this through the choices they make for healthy eating and sports. They make a good contribution to the life of the school through the school council and taking responsibility for special tasks. They are involved well in activities within the local community including regular fund-raising and support for charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good because they are underpinned by secure relationships, effective management and high levels of care. Pupils find most lessons interesting, challenging and enjoyable. Teaching is especially successful when time is used to good effect, tasks are demanding and help pupils enjoy learning. All adults give pupils much encouragement and praise, and as a result, pupils are keen to do their best. Teaching assistants usually contribute well to the quality of pupils' learning, although the support for pupils with learning difficulties is not consistently good. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not give enough time for pupils to work on their own and the pace of lessons is not brisk enough. As a result, independence and initiative are restricted and learning slows. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully to acknowledge effort and achievement and to help them move forward.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is diverse, well planned and enables most pupils to make good progress. Weaknesses in mathematics identified at the last inspection have been successfully remedied. Information and communication technology is used increasingly well throughout the curriculum. The recent dip in standards in writing has led to a thorough review of the school's literacy provision. This has resulted in plans that now provide pupils with much more meaningful contexts in which to develop their writing skills. A more imaginative approach to curriculum planning is producing a stimulating diet of learning experiences for pupils in, for example, the creative arts. The curriculum is very well enriched by a broad range of visits, visitors, after-school activities and local and national initiatives such as Mathematics Challenge. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is good. Lessons in personal, social and health education, assemblies and the school's Christian ethos are effective in promoting pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides high quality pastoral care for all groups of pupils. Parents speak highly of the care and support their children receive. Staff know pupils and many of their families well and they are alert to their individual needs. Pupils feel safe and happy in school because they have total trust in the adults and confidently turn to them for help when needed. The school works well with outside agencies to provide those who need extra help with necessary support. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection, safety and well-being meet the statutory requirements and are understood by all staff. The school has recently improved its procedures for tracking pupils' progress so that they can be given extra support. These are beginning to have a positive impact although this is not yet consistent throughout the school. Individual and group targets are set in all classes, but some pupils do not have clear knowledge and understanding of their targets and how these can help them to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good and are key factors in the school's continued successes. The dedicated and hard-working headteacher, ably supported by a strong and experienced deputy headteacher and leadership team, leads and manages the school well. The headteacher knows the school well and this is reflected in the school's honest and largely accurate self-evaluation. The fall in pupils' performance in writing in the 2005 national tests has provided the impetus to introduce initiatives to raise the achievement of some groups of pupils. These initiatives are being rigorously pursued, and as a result, are already showing some success. The school's capacity for further improvement is therefore judged as good. Morale in the school is high and teamwork is a real strength. For example, senior managers and subject leaders play a developing and crucial role in monitoring the school's work and performance. Leadership is further enhanced by the governors of the school who are supportive and challenging. As a result, they play their part in holding the school to account for what it achieves.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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	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	1
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	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?	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.

Annex A

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	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	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

27 April 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Lowe's Wong Junior School, Southwell, NG250AA

As you know, we recently visited your school to find out how well you are learning. Thank you for being so friendly and talking to us. We very much enjoyed being in your school and listening to what you had to say. Many of you told us that you are proud of your school and believe that you attend a good school. We are pleased to report that we agree with you! We especially like the warm and friendly atmosphere and the way staff take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy. They organise many visits and visitors to help make learning more interesting. You attend school regularly, which helps you to build on what you learn every day. We saw that most of you work very hard for your teachers. You know about the importance of having a healthy lifestyle and eating healthy meals. You appreciate the work of your school council, who work hard to help get things done.

We have asked your teachers to give you more opportunity to work on your own so that you can build on the good things they tell you. We know you can do that because most of you listen so well! We know that most of your lessons are really enjoyable and enable you to learn well. However, we have asked your teachers to make all lessons challenging by giving you work and support which enables you all to make good progress at all times. You can help them by making sure that you know your targets and by always working hard to achieve them. This will really help you get even better results than you do now!

We were impressed by the way your headteacher, deputy headteacher and all staff work hard to give you a good education. Your science work is very good and your English and mathematics are also good. Your teachers continue to give you lots of opportunities to improve your writing because this is an area that the school is trying to improve. You can help them by trying especially hard with this. They have been asked to check how you are doing often so that if any of you need extra help they can give it to you straightaway.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We know that you are prepared well for your future lives at Lowe's Wong. We hope that you will continue to work hard and help your teachers so that your school becomes even better in the future.

Derek Pattinson

Lead inspector