

Donnington Wood CofE Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123473
Local Authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	292679
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Graham Sims

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	167
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Wright
Headteacher	Sandra Osman
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2002
School address	Leonard Close Winifreds Drive Donnington Telford TF2 8BH
Telephone number	01952 386660
Fax number	01952 386664

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

Donnington Wood Junior School is a voluntary controlled Church of England school. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. Pupils typically join the school having reached broadly average standards in their national tests at the end of Year 2, although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The dynamic and enthusiastic leadership of the headteacher has resulted in significant improvement over the last three years at Donnington Wood, and the school is now providing pupils with a good education. National test results were very low when she joined in 2004 but have improved markedly, so that results in 2007 were above the national average in English and broadly average in mathematics and science. Pupils' behaviour has also improved significantly and is now good. The headteacher has inspired a very good team spirit amongst the staff, who show a real commitment to making the school even better and good capacity for further improvement.

Although there is some variation in the quality of the teaching, good teaching in most classes is enabling pupils to make good progress overall and to achieve well. Many pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have made particularly good progress because of the well-organised and good-quality support provided by the school's capable and experienced teaching assistants and the work of focus groups undertaken by the class teachers. Initiatives to improve pupils' reading skills and the quality of their writing have been particularly successful. While satisfactory, pupils' progress in mathematics has not been quite as good, as some of the teaching is still not challenging enough and work is not always matched accurately to pupils' needs.

The school's care, guidance and support are good and result in pupils' good personal development and well-being. Aspects of pastoral care are outstanding. One parent, for example, said that the care provided for her child had been positively life changing. The work of the learning mentor has helped some of the school's most vulnerable pupils and others to develop self-esteem and a positive approach to their education. Good provision for physical education, recent acquisition of 'Healthy School' status and good partnership with various organisations ensure that pupils develop a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle and to keep themselves safe. Pupils contribute well to the life of the school and the wider community, for example, through acting as a playground buddy, supporting those less fortunate than themselves through charitable work or visiting elderly residents in a local home.

The school provides a good curriculum with plenty of enrichment through visits to places of interest, visitors to the school, special activity weeks, as well as sports and musical activities. The curriculum for English, mathematics and science is well balanced, well planned and wide ranging, but the range of work in history and geography in most classes is limited, often unchallenging and does not support the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers provide good guidance for pupils during lessons and monitor their progress well through half-termly assessments. However, the marking of pupils work provides very little guidance on what pupils have done well or what they need to do to improve.

The school is led and managed well. Governors are knowledgeable and supportive, yet also challenging. Although some staff have relatively little leadership experience, members of the senior management team and subject coordinators are developing their roles well and helping to provide further impetus for improvement. The staff's commitment to the pupils' welfare, the improving quality of pupils' work and the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and the later world of work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide pupils with clearer guidance on what they have done well and what they need to improve when marking their work.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in all classes and sufficiently challenging for all pupils, particularly in mathematics.
- Improve the curriculum for history and geography and ensure that these and other subjects contribute to and consolidate the development of basic skills in literacy and numeracy.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards on entry to the school have been typically average, but have been below average for the last two intakes. The school's assessments show that there has been some underachievement in previous years in Year 3, but pupils have made good progress in recent years and standards have risen markedly. Pupils are now achieving well. Pupils make particularly good progress in English, where standards have risen from well below average to above average. Standards in mathematics and science are broadly average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve particularly well. In 2007, they achieved better results in English, mathematics and science than similar pupils nationally. The school's various support groups are particularly effective in helping pupils who are falling behind to make rapid progress and to catch up with their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The welcoming and friendly ethos of the school reflects the good personal development of the pupils, which has shown significant improvement in recent years. Pupils are polite and courteous and they behave well in lessons and around the school. They have a good sense of right and wrong and respect the views of others. The great majority of pupils enjoy school, respond well to the staff and participate enthusiastically in lessons. They work well together, either with partners or in small groups. They willingly take on responsibilities, and those who act as playground buddies or serve on the school council make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school. Although pupils say that there is still some bullying, they have confidence that teachers will sort out any problems and they feel safe and secure within the school environment. The level of attendance is now broadly average, having improved as a result of good procedures to follow up absences.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Rigorous monitoring and in-service training have improved teachers' planning, the organisation of teaching groups and the overall quality of teaching, with the result that pupils are now learning well. The teaching of English is particularly good. Group reading sessions are well organised and purposeful, and target setting is highly effective. There is still some inconsistency elsewhere, for example, in the teaching of mathematics, where there is not always enough challenge for some pupils, and not enough attention is given to the presentation of pupils' work. Staff relate well to the pupils and establish good working environments within their

classrooms. They use a good variety of teaching methods, make good use of information and communication technology and contribute well to pupils' personal development through encouraging paired discussions and self-assessment. The liaison between teachers and teaching assistants is excellent. The assistants make very good use of their time and are highly effective in working with small groups of pupils. Some groups make outstanding progress as a result. Teachers provide clear learning objectives, but do not always reinforce or consolidate previous learning sufficiently.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has worked effectively to improve the curricular opportunities offered to the pupils. A good variety of well-supported extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school and a wide range of visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning. Special events, such as arts week, the school choir and participation in concerts help to develop the pupils' self-esteem and confidence well. Good attention is given to meeting the needs of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also to those who have specific gifts or talents. Both groups do well as a result. Involvement in various sports initiatives and activities is not only enjoyed by the pupils but helps them to lead healthy lives. House-group activities help pupils to understand the importance of working as a team as they work together in mixed-age groups. Good provision for personal, social and health education has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. The curriculum for English has improved significantly, but opportunities are missed to develop and consolidate pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through work undertaken in other subjects. The curriculum for history and geography lacks sufficient depth in most classes.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided by staff are significant strengths which help to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and have done much to improve the self-esteem and confidence of pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Before and after school provision is well organised and enjoyed by the pupils who attend. Safeguarding procedures are robust, risk assessments are carried out effectively and the school's security has improved. It is now good. Staff keep a careful check on pupils' progress and use the information well to identify pupils who need additional help. While guidance given to pupils in class is good, the marking of pupils' work is not developmental enough. It does not give pupils sufficient guidance on what they have done well or what they need to improve, and not enough time is given for pupils to reflect on or improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has had a major impact on the school's development over the last three years. She has a good understanding of what still needs to be done and provides clear direction for staff and pupils. She has been particularly successful in developing the potential of her staff, ensuring good teamwork and building a common sense of purpose. Staff acknowledge that she has had a profound impact on improving pupils' behaviour and that she has inspired staff to enjoy their teaching and to develop new skills and expertise. The senior management team and subject leaders make up in enthusiasm what they lack in experience as they become

increasingly effective in monitoring and evaluating various aspects of the school's work. Governors involve themselves well in the life of the school. Since the previous inspection, they have made important strategic decisions about the school's leadership which have had a positive impact on the school's development. The target-setting process is becoming more rigorous, and targets for the future are suitably challenging. While the school collects a good range of data, it is not collated in a way which allows quick and easy analysis, and staff are not yet sufficiently involved in accounting for the progress of their pupils.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

8 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Donnington Wood C of E Junior School, Telford TF2 8BH

My colleague and I enjoyed our recent visit to your school and would like to thank you for your welcome and for talking to us. You think that you go to a good school, and we agree with you.

- These are the main things we found out during the inspection.
- You are making good progress in your work, particularly in English.
- You are polite and well behaved, and you work well with one another.
- You enjoy coming to school, particularly when there are special events or activities, and you participate well in lessons.
- You have a good understanding of what you need to do to keep yourselves safe and lead healthy lifestyles.
- The quality of the teaching is good, although it does vary from class to class.
- The teaching assistants and learning mentor provide really good help and support for those of you who work with them.
- The school provides you with a good variety of interesting activities.
- The staff take good care of you and check your progress regularly and carefully.
- The headteacher leads the school very well and all staff and governors have worked hard to improve the school over the last few years.
- To help the school become even better, we have asked the staff to:
 - give you clearer guidance when marking your work to show you what you have done well and what you need to improve
 - ensure that the teaching is equally as good in all classes, and that you are all given sufficiently challenging work in mathematics
 - help you to develop your literacy and numeracy skills and to discover more when undertaking your topic work in history and geography.

You can help make Donnington Wood even better by continuing to try your hardest and taking note of the advice your teachers give you about how to improve your work. We wish each one of you every success in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Mr Graham Sims Lead inspector

8 November 2007

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Lead inspector

