



Wilnecote Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124157
Local Authority Staffordshire
Inspection number 292908
Inspection dates 6–7 December 2006
Reporting inspector Ted Wheatley

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Smithy Lane
School category	Community		Wilnecote
Age range of pupils	7–10		Tamworth B77 5LA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01827 475035
Number on roll (school)	276	Fax number	01827 475041
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Karen Manuel
		Headteacher	Diane Brierley
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and pupils come from predominantly White British backgrounds. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and one is in the early stages of learning English. Pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds. Attainment on entry is average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is the same as seen in most schools. The school has experienced considerable disruption with several staff absent due to illness. The deputy headteacher and senior teacher took up appointment in September 2006.

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 education. Pupils' performance has improved over recent years and standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. In the past, pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory due to a combination of staff absence and unsuitable groupings for teaching mathematics, but these issues have now been resolved. The headteacher's clear direction for improvement has been a major factor in improving organisation of classes and aiding pupils' progress to improve. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the appointment of senior staff and the introduction of strategies to help raise standards are leading to more consistent progress in all subjects. Despite this, leadership and management are only satisfactory because subject leaders have not been consistently involved and responsible for improvements in their own subjects, but this is improving. Even though teaching is satisfactory, the highest attainers in several classes, including those classes organised by ability, are not always challenged enough. Practice in using assessment information is uneven and does not always show how well pupils have progressed over time. Similarly, marking is inconsistent and does not always give enough guidance on how pupils can make further progress. The curriculum, although satisfactory, does not always meet the full needs of pupils of different ability. However, there is an improving range of visits and special events that increasingly engage pupils' interests and contribute to their positive attitudes and behaviour. The range of activities outside the classroom is good and pupils are keen to take part in them. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, with sound skills to prepare them for future life. Care, support and guidance are satisfactory overall, with secure health and safety procedures and satisfactory academic guidance, despite some inconsistencies in the use of assessment information to set targets and guide pupils. Pupils enjoy being in school and their attendance is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement by making sure teachers provide work to meet the different needs of all pupils.
- Ensure that assessment information is used consistently, especially by subject leaders, so that teachers know how pupils progress over time and can plan teaching accordingly.
- Improve marking so that teachers consistently provide clear guidance on what pupils need to do improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The achievement of pupils is satisfactory and standards are average. In the past achievement was unsatisfactory due to inconsistencies in English and mathematics results. The National test results for 2006 were below average in mathematics and average in English and science. Despite the school's efforts, earlier disruptions to staffing and inadequate groupings for teaching mathematics, based on how pupils

were grouped for English, had led to low results. This year standards observed in classes are average in English, mathematics and science and groupings for all subjects are well matched to pupils' ability. The school's efforts are leading to better progress in both English and mathematics and pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, in some classes higher attainers do not consistently achieve as well as they could. In classes that are organised by ability there are still aspects of teaching that require strengthening and in a few instances teachers do not address the relatively narrow range of learning needs of pupils in these classes. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make steady and satisfactory progress. The support they receive is sound and sensitive to pupils' special needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and older pupils talk enthusiastically about how the school has improved in recent times. Attendance is good. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. They acquire self-confidence to express their opinions, feel safe and say that bullying is rare and incidents are dealt with effectively. They make a satisfactory contribution to the community. However, basic skills in numeracy, while improving, are not quite as well developed as they should be to prepare for them for life outside school. Pupils behave well and demonstrate good attitudes to school and to learning. They are polite and respectful and they contribute effectively to the school's improvement through the school council. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, for example, organising stalls for the Christmas Fair and designing and selling a quiz book to raise funds for a local charity. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and the good range of activities outside of the normal school day contributes to this development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers work well together to plan work for their classes. Teaching assistants are increasingly involved in this planning so that best use is made of their skills, particularly in helping pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Lessons are carefully planned with a clear purpose so pupils understand what they are to learn. However, there are occasions when work is not matched fully to the range of interests and abilities found in classes and this limits some pupils' progress. Resources, including for information and communication technology (ICT), are used well to strengthen understanding during explanations and to increase pupils' interest. Discussions are generally stimulating because teachers have high expectations for attentiveness, and encourage all pupils to take part. Pupils are well trained to co-operate with others and to work on their own without adult control but they do

not always work quickly enough or check their work closely for accuracy. Marking and end-of-lesson reviews are used well to praise success but not always to identify weaknesses that need more work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The links between subjects are a satisfactory feature, particularly when topics catch pupils' interest and they want to do well. This has led to an improvement in writing standards, particularly of boys. The use of computers for different purposes has improved, with the result that standards in ICT are now satisfactory. Satisfactory use is made of intensive programmes for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school does well to widen pupils' experiences. French lessons for younger juniors are a good feature. After-school clubs are popular and cover a good range of activities. Links with other schools and the local community are used well, for example to boost skills in sports and performing arts.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is a caring place and pupils are safe and secure. Pupils report that they always have someone to go to when they have any concerns. The school holds pastoral care as a high priority and this is noticeable in the successful integration of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Child protection arrangements, risk assessments and health and safety procedures are secure. Anti-bullying procedures are good and Year 6 pupils remember the activities during the anti-bullying event as effective in reminding them of the impact of bullying on other pupils. They stated that there is little bullying in school now. Academic guidance is satisfactory, though there are some inconsistencies. Pupils are not always set clear targets, mainly because the use of assessment information is inconsistent, making it difficult to see how pupils have made progress over time. Teachers are beginning to involve the pupils in measuring their own success.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides strong leadership and gives clear direction for how the school should improve. In the past, uneven management expertise among subject leaders slowed the pace of improvement. This is getting better due to a shared understanding of what the school needs to do to improve and staff development for subject leaders. Staff changes and the illness and absence of several staff contributed to the slow pace of improvement. These issues are largely resolved, with staffing now settled and good quality senior appointments. As a result achievement is improving. The capacity for further improvement is sound. Governors are supportive and meet their statutory obligations. They are well informed about the school and provide a satisfactory level of challenge for the headteacher. The school's links with parents and

the community are good. The local authority provides good support. Effective links with a local business are helping improve pupils' reading skills, and close collaboration with support agencies helps the school deal well with social and health problems.

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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 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?	3
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	3
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?	3

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

- We very much enjoyed our time at your school. You made us feel very welcome and were very friendly to us. We spoke to several of you in meetings, lessons and around school and that helped us to build a clear view of your school. The best things about your school are
- Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.
- Your achievement is satisfactory.
- Your attitudes and behaviour are good. You enjoy school and your attendance is good.
- The headteacher knows what the school needs to do to improve and she has made this clear to staff and governors.
- The school takes good care of you and teaches you about healthy lifestyles.
- You enjoy all the interesting out of school activities and trips. To improve things further, we have asked the school to
- Plan work carefully to make sure you all do as well as you can.
- Make sure that teachers use what they know about how well you do in school to plan work to help you do even better.
- Make sure that the marking of your work gives you clear guidance on how improve.