

William MacGregor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124219
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	292925
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Frances Gillam

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	172
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	A Barrett
Headteacher	Claire Hanks
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2003
School address	Glascote Road Tamworth B77 2AF
Telephone number	01827 475705
Fax number	01827 475707

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

William MacGregor is smaller than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is similar to that of most schools.

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 has established a positive climate for learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their personal development and well-being, and achieve satisfactorily in their work. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is good. They make good choices about their diet and take regular exercise because of the good emphasis the school places on healthy lifestyles. Most pupils act sensibly and look out for one another. Many pupils say their teachers are helpful. They say pupils are friendly and this enables them to quickly develop positive relationships.

Children's attainment on entry in the Reception Year is average although their skills are underdeveloped for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Children do well in their first year because good teaching raises standards in these areas and almost all children achieve or exceed the goals for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Predominantly satisfactory teaching in the rest of the school ensures that most pupils make expected progress and reach broadly average standards by Year 6. Efforts to improve pupils' reading and writing are proving successful and standards in English have risen since the last inspection. The school is providing a greater range of reading resources to stimulate boys' interest and pupils say they now find writing themes relevant and appealing. In science, increased opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve scientific problems do not motivate girls as much as they do boys. Within mathematics, mental and problem-solving activities appeal to pupils but some pupils find the activities too easy. This is because teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to plan the next steps in learning, especially when they plan activities for pupils to do when they work on their own.

A strength of the satisfactory curriculum is the range of interesting activities outside normal lessons which enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' enjoyment of school. These activities also promote healthy lifestyles, particularly in keeping active and fit. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties receive well focused support, which helps them to grow in confidence. Most pupils behave well but a small number of boys find it difficult to concentrate, treat others kindly and work effectively in lessons. Although these pupils receive some helpful individual support and advice, procedures for recording incidents and supporting these pupils' behaviour are not robust enough and do not always work as well as they should.

Satisfactory leadership and management ensure staff and governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They identify the right action to bring about change for the better and this has led to improvement since the last inspection in English and pupils' attendance. Tracking pupils' progress, especially in English and mathematics, is rigorous, but it is yet to be fully developed in science. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

Communication between parents and the school is not good enough. Some parents feel that they are not always kept well informed, that they are not always listened to or their views given sufficient consideration.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements.
- Ensure that teachers use assessment information more effectively to set challenging activities in mathematics, especially when pupils work on their own.

- Ensure that science activities interest girls and motivate them to do their best.
- Improve the recording and monitoring of pupils' personal skills to provide better support and guidance for pupils with behavioural difficulties.
- Ensure that parents are listened to, their views considered and that they are informed and kept up to date with important aspects of the school's work.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory for most pupils in Years 1 to 6 and standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. Standards in English have improved but standards in science fell in the 2006 tests, largely due to the performance of girls who tend to find science less interesting than other subjects. Standards in mathematics are average.

Children's progress in the Reception Year is good, particularly in language, reading, writing and mathematics. Activities in the Reception Year build well on children's experiences and they quickly settle into school. Most of the children achieve or exceed the goals for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress from Years 1 to 6 but pupils could be doing better in mathematics, especially when they are working independently. Work is not always adapted sufficiently well to ensure pupils make good use of the strategies and mental skills they have mastered. Activities are sometimes too easy and this reduces the opportunity for pupils to develop their ideas further and so enable better progress in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory and pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. Most act sensibly, with due care for their own safety and that of others, but the behaviour of a small group, mainly boys, causes concern both to staff and other pupils. Pupils choose to eat healthily and take regular exercise. Pupils say they enjoy school. Their attendance is good. They contribute satisfactorily to their community, raising funds and taking part in charitable events. The school council is active but does not always have the chance to consult other pupils as widely as it might. Representatives are capable of taking greater responsibility for the organisation and management of the school council. Pupils work together well and, with their satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills, this is preparing them adequately for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Children in the Reception Year get off to a good start. Good teaching focuses on developing children's personal skills so that children learn to work well on their own or with others. Skills in reading, writing and mathematics are taught well, giving children a firm foundation for future learning.

Most teachers respond well to initiatives to improve pupils' learning. This has had a good impact on the pupils' learning in English, which is now better than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils say that literacy lessons are often fun and they enjoy the increasing opportunities to work and talk together. In most classes teachers plan carefully for the different needs of their pupils but sometimes they do not use assessment information as well as they could in mathematics to challenge the average and more able pupils in their class. This leads to activities that do not always build effectively on pupils' previous learning. Learning support assistants ensure that pupils with learning difficulties take a full part in lessons and encourage them to try hard and 'have a go'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils experience a broad range of learning activities that for the most part build satisfactorily on what they have done before. Increasing boys' enjoyment of reading and writing has been a main focus within the English curriculum. Recent developments are now providing more exciting reading resources and interesting writing opportunities, which boys say they enjoy. Work is under way to improve pupils' investigative skills and use of numeracy skills in science. Pupils are beginning to make better progress but girls, particularly the average and more able, are still not fully motivated by the work in science and they tend not to progress as quickly as boys do. The school provides a good range of exciting activities outside normal lessons. Pupils find these interesting and the activities enhance their enjoyment of school and personal skills well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils say that staff support them well. They say staff are kind and there is always someone they can turn to if they have any worries. The school has worked successfully to raise pupils' awareness of health and has been awarded Healthy School status. Targets to challenge and encourage pupils to do their best are relatively new but are beginning to help pupils to improve their work. Although most pupils say they feel safe, the behaviour of a small number of boys worries some pupils. Procedures for monitoring behaviour and particularly in recording incidents leading to exclusion are not rigorous enough. This means it is difficult for staff to identify flashpoints or trends in pupils' behaviour to focus support more effectively. In addition, the school recognises that it does not always apply risk assessment well enough and that safeguarding procedures do not meet current government requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Self-evaluation processes are satisfactory and are driving school improvement. The headteacher analyses test data carefully and with subject leaders evaluates the quality of lessons. This ensures that priorities are relevant and focus appropriately on improving pupils' achievements. Action to bring about change for the better is proving successful, especially in English and in pupils' attendance, which are better now than at the last inspection. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development from the headteacher's evaluations but not enough information is shared with them about how well, for example, different groups of pupils are doing. This means that governors are not in a strong enough

position to raise questions about the school's effectiveness. Not all parents are satisfied with the way information is shared with them, the way they are listened to, and their views considered and taken into account. This is something the leadership of the school is aware of but not enough has been done to forge better working relationships with parents.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
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?	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.

Annex A

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

22 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of William MacGregor Primary School, Tamworth, B77 2AF

Thank you for making the team of inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently.

Your school, the people in charge and your teachers do a satisfactory job and this is helping you to make satisfactory progress and reach broadly average standards by the time you leave in Year 6.

Here are some of the good things we found about your school.

- The children in the Reception Year do well. They make a good start to school and enjoy all the exciting things they have to learn.
- You say you like your school and this shows in your eagerness to learn.
- Your attendance is good and you make sure you arrive in time for lessons.
- You enjoy the special activities that are provided for you outside normal lessons.
- You are friendly and polite.
- You make sensible choices about what you eat and take plenty of exercise, and this is helping you to grow up strong and healthy.

To improve the school still further we have asked the people in charge and your teachers to work together on four things:

- To make sure that you are always challenged to do your best in mathematics, especially when you work on your own.
- To make science more interesting for girls so they try harder and do their best.
- To help some of you to pay better attention in lessons and to play more constructively and considerately.
- To make sure your parents are fully involved in the life of your school, that they listen to what your parents have to say and always consider your parents' ideas.

You can all help by setting good examples in your behaviour and working hard.

With best wishes for the future,

Fran Gillam Lead inspector