

Wellesbourne CofE Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 125651 |
| Local Authority | Warwickshire |
| Inspection number | 293319 |
| Inspection date | 28 March 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Ian Hodgkinson |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 327 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Daniel Barton |
| Headteacher | Graeme Burgess |
| Date of previous school inspection | 27 June 2002 |
| School address | Mountford Close Wellesbourne Warwick CV35 9QG |
| Telephone number | 01789 840311 |
| Fax number | 01789 840108 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Numbers on roll at this large school have risen rapidly in recent years, and have doubled since the start of the decade. Pupil numbers are greatest in the younger age groups, which reflects the school's growing popularity with parents in the village it serves. The village is relatively prosperous, although the social and economic circumstances of children's families vary widely. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. Most pupils are of White British heritage.

The school has recently extended its provision to offer full day care and nursery education, which has been inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. Standards have been transformed since the last inspection by the clear-sighted and determined leadership of the headteacher and his senior team. Having been well below average at the time of the last inspection, standards are now above average. Indeed, national test results for Year 6 pupils in both English and science were exceptionally high in 2006. The good progress pupils make to reach these high standards begins in the Foundation Stage (Reception classes), where staff help children to develop their skills through a well-judged balance of adult-led and independent activities. Thereafter, good teaching throughout the school makes learning fun as teachers use an exciting range of resources and approaches in lessons. They give pupils good care, support and guidance. Teachers make increasingly effective use of targets for expected attainment to keep track of pupils' progress and give additional support to those in need. However, teachers' marking does not always give pupils precise enough information about how they can improve their work to meet their targets.

The school has a good curriculum which, together with an excellent programme of out-of-school-hours sport, practical and creative activities, contributes much to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their good personal development. In particular, pupils develop exceptionally healthy lifestyles. There is a very high degree of participation in regular physical activity and pupils have a very good understanding of how to live and eat healthily. Pupils make a highly effective contribution to the school and local community, by eagerly taking on responsibilities, such as lunchtime duties or as receptionists. They feel that the school takes their views seriously and that they can really make a difference through participation on the School Council and by taking part in projects to improve the school's grounds and environment.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior managers rigorously monitor the success of the school in meeting its high aspirations. Their evaluation of the school's performance is accurate and informs effective planning for improvement, although subject action plans are not all focused sharply enough on how to raise standards. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, until recently they had limited direct involvement in the evaluation of the school's performance. The curriculum has been successfully broadened and enriched since the last inspection, but work planned in subjects other than the core ones of English, mathematics and science is not always challenging enough. This is because effective links are not always made between subjects. For example, pupils are not consistently expected to apply their literacy or numeracy skills to raise the quality and accuracy of their work in other subjects. Nonetheless, the school's strong improvement since the last inspection speaks volumes about its good capacity to make further progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of marking to ensure that pupils get clear guidance about how to improve their work and meet their targets.
- Plan better curriculum links which allow pupils to apply and develop their literacy and numeracy skills and raise the quality of their work across a range of subjects.
- Develop the role of governors in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

There has been a remarkable improvement in standards at the school since the previous inspection. Standards are now above average, and national test results for Year 6 pupils in 2006 were exceptionally high. Standards in science have been high for some time, reflecting confident subject knowledge of teachers and a very good use of resources to support pupils' learning. English results have risen from well below average at the last inspection to exceptionally high in 2006. Children join the school in the Reception class with knowledge and skills which are generally a little above the levels expected for their age. They make good progress so that by the end of their Reception year the majority of pupils are working at levels beyond those expected for their age. Thereafter, all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make good progress from Year 1 to Year 6, and achieve well. However, too few pupils have reached higher levels of attainment in tests at the end of Year 2 in recent years. Progress for higher attainers in Year 2 is more in line with that of others this year as a result of more challenging targets and special teaching programmes for more-able pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Many parents wrote to say how much their children like school and 'can't wait to come in the morning.' One said that, 'There seems to be a real feeling of peace, order and happiness around the school which... manifests itself most during assemblies.' Assemblies and other whole-school events, such as singing and choral activities, are indeed uplifting. These events show pupils to be highly confident, very respectful, and willing and eager to make a full contribution. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They behave well, and the challenging behaviour of a minority of pupils is well managed by teachers, so that lessons are orderly and pupils can learn. Although the volatile behaviour of a few pupils can be unsettling for others, most feel safe and secure in the school, and say that relationships are good. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school by willingly taking on responsibilities. They are happy to do this because they feel that the school values and recognises their work and listens to their views. Pupils are therefore well equipped with the maturity, confidence and skills needed for the next stage of their education. The extent of their participation in physical activity, and their general awareness of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, is outstanding.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their lessons. From the Reception classes onwards, teachers set work in interesting contexts and use a very good range of methods and resources to stimulate pupils' interests and enquiry skills. Staff show a high degree of commitment to out-of-school-hours activities to further stimulate pupils' enjoyment of school. Teachers have a clear view of the standards their pupils should achieve by setting them targets for expected attainment. They use this information effectively to plan lessons which mostly meet the needs of pupils of all abilities in their classes. There are occasions where tasks are not challenging enough for higher attainers, who take the opportunity to produce over-simplistic responses. Teaching assistants provide

good support to ensure that those with learning difficulties make good progress in relation to their very clear individual goals.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Although the school has been strongly focused on raising attainment in English, mathematics and science, there has been an improvement in the quality and breadth of the curriculum beyond these core subjects. This is particularly evident in practical and creative subjects, where standards were judged too low in the last inspection. In art, design and technology and music, good displays of practical work now provide evidence of the higher priority given to work in these areas. However, some shortcomings remain because in some subjects work is not always challenging enough. Too many worksheets requiring undemanding simple answers reflect opportunities missed to link subjects together and help pupils apply and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in the production of high quality work. The personal, social, health and citizenship education curriculum, together with the extensive range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development, and especially to their outstanding development of healthy lifestyles. A very well-organised Foundation Stage curriculum successfully develops children's skills through a good balance of adult-led activities and opportunities for independent and child-initiated learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils. Procedures for securing the health, safety and protection of pupils are appropriately in place and regularly reviewed. The school has very good links with local nurseries to secure good information about children before they arrive in Reception, which helps children get off to a very good start and develop their confidence and self-esteem. Parents are fulsome in their praise of the school for the regular information they receive about school events and their children's progress. They value the ready contact they can make with the headteacher and other staff if they have any concerns. The school works closely with external agencies to ensure that its most vulnerable pupils are well supported and given every opportunity to succeed. Pupils' academic progress against their expected levels of attainment is very carefully monitored. The intervention which takes place to support those at risk of underachieving is very successful in helping all pupils to keep on track to achieve well. However, teachers' marking does not always give pupils clear guidance on how to improve against their specific targets they are given in literacy and numeracy.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The fortunes of the school have been transformed under the astute leadership of its headteacher. Significant improvements in standards, the development of very pleasant and secure environments around the site and buildings, and strong investment in very good resources for learning and recreation have won back the confidence of parents in the village. The school gives good value for money. An ethos of continuous improvement has been established through regular and rigorous monitoring of all aspects of performance. This leads to very effective professional development of staff. As a result, staff now routinely reflect on the success of their work by measuring its impact on outcomes for pupils. However, in action plans in subjects

other than English, mathematics and science, subject leaders concentrate too much on setting out routine tasks and do not focus enough on how to improve pupils' performance. Governors have in the past been over-reliant on the headteacher for direction and information. They have recognised the need to develop a broader view in order to hold the school to account. The re-structuring of governors' committees and the allocation of responsibilities to governors for monitoring specific aspects of the school's work is now bearing fruit, especially in updating school policies. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed, with a particularly good focus on planning to ensure that children make a smooth transition from nursery settings into Reception and on to Year 1 classes.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

| | |
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| 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 quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 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

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|--|---|
| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 2 |
| 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 | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

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|---|---|
| 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

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| 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 | 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 |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Many thanks for the welcome you gave me when I visited the school for its recent inspection. I very much enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work. It was great to have the chance to hear your rousing singing in the hall. I also got to see just how many of you are involved in sport and other activities after school. The school does much through its good curriculum and the terrific range of activities it offers to ensure that your personal development is good. In particular, you have an exceptionally good understanding of how to live healthily. Similarly, your willingness to take on many responsibilities for helping the school to run smoothly is excellent.

You and your parents let me know that you think Wellesbourne is a good school. I agree. You are taught well. Your teachers make learning fun and plan good lessons to help you make good progress and achieve well. Teachers and other staff look after you well. They keep a careful check on your progress, and give good support to those who need it. The standards you are reaching now are above average, and the test results for Year 6 pupils have risen dramatically in recent years. Such improvement, along with big improvements to the facilities and resources of the school, show that the school is well led and managed. In particular, your headteacher has guided the school extremely well in recent years, and has made you and your parents proud of its achievements.

There are of course some ways in which the school can get even better. Firstly, I have asked teachers to give you clearer guidance on how to improve your work, by linking their comments in marking more closely to the targets you have been set. Secondly, the general quality of your work can be improved by making sure that you apply your good skills in literacy and numeracy across other subjects. So I have asked the school to make clearer links between subjects to help this happen. Thirdly, I have asked the governors to continue the work they have been doing recently to develop their understanding of how well the school is doing and how it needs to improve.

I wish you every success for the future.