

Weddington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130895
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	302842
Inspection dates	24–25 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Chris Kessell

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	
School	389
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Banks
Headteacher	Deborah Ward
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2004
School address	Winchester Avenue Nuneaton CV10 0DR
Telephone number	024 76340729
Fax number	024 76382478

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds, although a number of other ethnic groups are represented in the school. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. This is because the school has a specialist Speech and Language base and a Hearing Impaired resource. There have been many recent changes to school staffing and the current headteacher was appointed in April 2006.

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 school that is going places. It currently provides a satisfactory education for its pupils but is not far from being a good school. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. Since her arrival a year ago, the school has improved tremendously. Parents reflected this in written comments such as 'Children now reach their potential', 'The school operates in a very efficient manner' and 'There has been a vast improvement in my child's education'. Pupils are also positive, with one commenting, 'The school has improved one hundred per cent in the last year'.

The headteacher is well supported by the deputy head and senior team. They have also contributed well to the school's rapid improvement and leadership and management are good overall. There is still work to be done. The quality of teaching is improving and, although satisfactory overall, is good and even outstanding in a number of classes through the school. However, the quality is not consistent enough to ensure that pupils always make good progress. Pupils' underachievement, which was an issue in the school, has been eradicated, but there are still 'pockets' in the school where pupils are only making satisfactory progress, often as a result of less effective teaching. Standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science by Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is particularly well led and has also improved significantly over the last year. These pupils receive good levels of well-organised support and, as a result, make good progress.

The school's satisfactory curriculum includes a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and other activities. Pupils enjoy their lessons and all that the school has to offer and this is reflected in their above-average levels of attendance. The youngest children get a sound start to their education in the Foundation Stage (Reception), but are not given enough opportunities to develop independence and the progress they make is not recorded rigorously. The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good. The school has worked hard in developing academic targets for the pupils and providing good guidance on how to achieve them. These have already contributed well to improving pupils' achievement. The school places high value on the pupils' personal development and well-being, which are good. Moral and social development is a strength of the school and can be seen in the pupils' good behaviour and good relationships. Pupils are caring, friendly and polite. They welcome visitors enthusiastically, talking positively about their work and the school. Cultural development, although not unsatisfactory, does not always contribute effectively to pupils' understanding of other faiths and the cultural differences that are commonly found in modern Britain. Pupils are well informed about healthy eating and the benefits of exercise. However, this good knowledge and understanding is not always reflected in their choices of breaktime snacks and lunches.

Improvements in the quality of teaching, the effective tracking of pupils' progress, rigorous analysis of data and good target setting show that the school has a good capacity to improve even further. At its last inspection, pupils were judged to be underachieving. This is no longer the case. The school's future looks positive, particularly as there is a good understanding amongst the senior staff of what the school does well and what needs to improve. In the words of some parents, 'The school has turned round; it's well run and forward thinking'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of all teaching to that of the best so that all pupils make good progress throughout the school.
- Ensure that children get a good start to school by improving the provision in the Foundation Stage.
- Extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Parents acknowledge that their children are now making better progress. 'The attention to individual needs has greatly improved,' is a typical comment. When children enter the Reception classes, their overall attainment is similar to that found in many schools. As a result of satisfactory teaching and learning, standards are average by the time they start Year 1. In 2006, the outcomes of the national assessments at the end of Year 2 were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. The results of the Year 6 tests were average in English, mathematics and science. Rigorous analysis by the headteacher and senior staff showed that a significant minority of pupils did not do as well as they should have. They set about addressing this issue by significantly improving the assessment of pupils, the tracking of their progress and by setting pupils challenging but realistic learning targets. Large strides have been made, so that all individuals and groups of pupils now make at least satisfactory progress. Many make good progress and pupils say that they are now working harder. 'We used to find lessons easy', was one comment. However, there is still a way to go before this will significantly improve standards because of previous underachievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are provided with good, focused support that is encompassed by well-managed provision. This results in them making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know there are grown-ups they can approach if upset or worried. They emphasise that bullying is rare but are confident that staff deal with it successfully. The recent introduction of the 'Worry Box' is welcomed as the pupils know their concerns are listened to. The democratically elected school council is pro-active and proud of things it has helped improve, such as playtime activities. Pupils know their views are taken seriously. Fundraising for those less fortunate encourages children to think of others. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the world of work in numeracy and literacy lessons. Teamwork is effectively learnt by working well in pairs or groups and is encouraged in all classes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Evidence from the school's rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching indicates that the quality of teaching has been steadily improving over the current academic year. Much of it is good, such as in Year 6, but in areas of the school like the Foundation Stage, teaching is satisfactory and pupils are only making satisfactory progress. Teachers usually plan their lessons

to meet the wide range of needs in their classes. Work set matches the needs of all pupils and results in many pupils making good progress. Most teachers' marking is effective in showing pupils what they have to do to improve their work and indicating whether pupils have achieved their lesson intentions. When teaching is less effective, expectations are not high enough and the pace of learning is slower. Consequently, pupils do not make good progress.

Pupils are enthusiastic learners. They are able to work successfully by themselves or, when asked, together in pairs or larger groups. They hold mature discussions with one another and are prepared to share their views and ideas in front of their classmates. Teachers use interactive whiteboards successfully to make learning more exciting and interesting. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school has developed a curriculum that is stimulating and interesting. It supports the pupils' personal development well. It is well planned to ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged. The curriculum is enriched by the development of 'challenge weeks', where the normal subject timetable is dropped and the pupils work on a single project. For example, a business and enterprise week introduced such elements as financial planning. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Too many activities are formal and adult-led. The children do not have sufficient opportunities to work and play by themselves and make their own decisions. Assessment in this part of the school is not rigorous enough.

A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided, many of which support the healthy development of the pupils. They include judo and gardening, as well as team sports. While the school provides opportunities for pupils to experience a range of drama, music and art activities, not enough work is done to prepare them for life in a multicultural society.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All the pupils are personally well known and they are given good care, guidance and support. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit from sensitive personal support which enables them to participate fully in lessons and make good progress. Good use is made of external agencies and specialists to promote pupils' welfare when required. Child protection procedures and health and safety arrangements are secure and effective risk assessments are undertaken.

Procedures to assess pupils' work and track their progress are good in most parts of the school. In the Foundation Stage, adults do not monitor the children sufficiently. In Years 1 to 6 the pupils are aware of the targets set for them and the school is working hard to ensure they are specific and challenging. The support and guidance given to pupils to reach their targets are good and are helping to improve pupils' achievement. The school provides parents with effective information to support their children's work at home and guidance on healthy eating.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the new headteacher is outstanding. She has a clear vision of what the school needs to do to improve further and the strength of character to ensure that this will happen. Under her inspirational leadership the school has put in place many improvements in a relatively short time. Monitoring and evaluation procedures, particularly for teaching, are rigorous and are having the necessary effect of improving the quality of provision. Strong senior teachers working closely as a team have helped this. There is a common sense of purpose amongst staff, working together to ensure that they can offer the best to the children in their care. All are clearly focused on raising standards and successfully promote the well-being of children.

Governance is satisfactory. The newly re-formed governing body is well led yet governors acknowledge that they still have 'a way to go' to ensure all are playing a full part in proceedings. The governors feel that they now understand their roles and responsibilities better. They appreciate the need to challenge the staff more and to ensure the progress of pupils is carefully monitored so no underachievement can re-occur.

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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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	No

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	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 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	2
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?	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	2
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	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

26 April 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Weddington Primary School, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 0DR

You probably remember that we visited your school recently to see how well it is doing. This letter is to tell you about our findings. Firstly, thank you very much for all the help you gave inspectors. You were very polite and we particularly appreciated you opening doors for us and saying 'hello' with bright smiles on your faces.

Many of you told us how much the school had improved over the last year and we would agree with you. Much of this is the result of your outstanding headteacher and the hard work of other staff. You are currently receiving a satisfactory education that is getting better all of the time. Many of your teachers are good and enabling you to make good progress. This is not the case everywhere so we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to make sure that all teaching is good.

You all enjoy the things that the school has to offer through its satisfactory curriculum. You talk about your work confidently. For example, the Year 6 pupils explained to me how they were getting traffic lights to work on the computer.

So that children get off to a flying start when they begin school, we have asked for the curriculum in the Reception classes to be improved. The staff look after you well. We were particularly impressed at the way they help you achieve your targets and how good you were at knowing what your targets are. You understand the importance of exercise and eating healthily, although some of you could bring healthier snacks and lunches to school. Most of you attend school regularly, are well behaved and good at helping each other. You do not know as much as you should about other religions and the different ways that other groups of people live. We have asked the school to improve this.

Thank you once again for all of your help and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Chris Kessell, Lead Inspector