

Wolf Fields Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101909
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	307845
Inspection dates	15–16 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Sheila Nolan

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	379
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	85
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr T Croxson
Headteacher	Ms S Gata-Aura
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Norwood Road London UB2 4JS
Telephone number	020 8843 9901
Fax number	020 8571 3350

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wolf Fields School serves an area which is very diverse, culturally and economically. The overwhelming majority of its pupils are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Pupils from Asian heritages make up the largest groups in the school. Three quarters of the pupils, much higher than average, have a home language other than English. Most have little knowledge of English when they join the school. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is above average but the percentage with moderate learning difficulties is lower than that found nationally. High numbers of pupils join or leave the school at other than customary times. The school has provision for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wolf Fields is a good school. This judgement echoes that of parents and pupils and reflects accurately the school's evaluation of its work. 'Everyone gets on well in this mixed community', commented a parent. The school council added its voice in praise of the school saying, 'This is a good school because you learn lots of things and teachers listen to your views.'

The school has gone from strength-to-strength since the last inspection. Pupils' performance has risen to reach at least average standards in each of English, mathematics and science in the most recent national tests. All groups of pupils achieve well between Years 1 and 6, especially those who remain in the school throughout. Able pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics and science but are not yet as successful at the higher levels of English. The school has rightly identified this as a priority. Children's progress in the Nursery and Reception is satisfactory because until recently the school has concentrated more on their personal development than their learning.

At the heart of improvements in the school have been the good leadership and management. Very ably led by the present headteacher, the senior team and staff have pulled together well in a determined drive to raise pupils' performance and to provide a rich diet of opportunities to help them gain fluency in English and a true sense of belonging to the school community. Because of the outstanding care, guidance and support for each individual, pupils' personal development and spiritual, moral, cultural and social development are excellent. Pupils from whatever cultural group feel valued and understand the importance of respecting their many different traditions. They are helped in this by the well thought-out curriculum. The school's inclusive ethos means pupils feel very safe and get to know each other in a secure environment.

Pupils genuinely enjoy school. They show this when they sing their hearts out, for example, in the music assembly. Because they are happy, pupils' attendance improves the longer they remain in school. There are still a few families, however, who take lengthy holidays in term time. Time off for a range of religious observances also depresses attendance figures artificially. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how to keep healthy, eat sensibly and participate well in physical activities. Many make a difference to others, not least through the school council and through generous support for those less well placed than themselves. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education through their excellent work habits and through their appreciation of how to live in a diverse community.

Since the last inspection, the school has done much to improve teaching and learning. It is now good in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory in EYFS. Well-considered training has helped staff to develop expertise in assessing and supporting pupils at the very early stages of learning English, in developing pupils' writing, and in finding ways to improve attendance. The school has very successfully found new ways to engage with parents. Links with the local community are strong. The most important next steps for the school include ensuring that able pupils reach their full potential and that information on children's progress in the Nursery and Reception groups is analysed effectively.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make a sound start in the Nursery. Under the new leadership of the EYFS, there are improved links between the Nursery and the Reception Years. Resources are now very well organised, both indoors and outdoors.

Almost all pupils join the school with skills that are well below those expected for their age. Most have little English. The school places a very strong emphasis on pupils' personal development so that they develop positive attitudes to school and good social skills. As a result, they make faster progress in their personal development than in their learning. After a few weeks in school, children are able to play together, take turns and share fairly. Children are encouraged to develop independence, for example, through self-registration and through recognising the initial letters of their names. Relationships between children and between adults and children are good.

Children make steady progress in their learning because teaching is satisfactory. They make good gains in their spoken English and in listening skills. Their progress is slowest in reading and writing, calculation and creative development. Teachers are beginning to plan more effectively than previously and are developing their skills in accurately assessing children's progress and in deploying support staff. Nevertheless, checks on how well children in the Nursery and Reception achieve are sometimes over generous and there are still missed opportunities to work efficiently in small groups rather than with single pupils within the group.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that able pupils achieve as well in English as in mathematics and science.
- Intensify efforts to improve provision in the Nursery and Reception Year and ensure that information on children's progress is analysed accurately and effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have risen year-on-year since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well and reach average standards by the end of Year 6. For many, starting points in the Nursery and in Year 1 are much lower than is typical nationally. Communication skills are a particular weakness as most have little or no knowledge of English when they join the school. The school is very effective in ensuring that pupils across the range of minority ethnic groups make equally steady progress. All achieve well, including those with moderate learning difficulties, speech and language delay and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

Pupils' progress accelerates as they move through the school. The 2008 provisional test results for Year 6 and Year 2 improved on those of previous years. Year 6 pupils exceeded their challenging targets in each of English, mathematics and science. However, fewer able pupils reached the highest available levels in English compared with mathematics and science. Although pupils at the early stages of acquiring English make fast gains in fluency, the high numbers joining the school with limited knowledge of English at other than customary times depresses test results. Able pupils who remain from the Nursery to Year 6 achieve well in English but less favourably than in mathematics and science. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below average in mathematics, science and in speaking and listening and well below average in reading and writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils really enjoy school and the majority attend regularly. Their attendance improves the longer they are at Wolf Fields. Relationships are excellent and make for a genuinely harmonious community. Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and this helps them to learn well. Pupils know how to conduct themselves in the dining room and playgrounds, having agreed 'the rules' together with the staff. They remind each other when they forget their manners or become over-excited. Older pupils care well for younger ones, acting as buddies and play leaders. The school council contributes very effectively to decision-making and solving challenges in the day-to-day running of the school. Pupils also contribute very generously to the wider community, both here and overseas. They are rightly proud of their efforts to support an Indian orphanage by financing two cows so that the children can have daily milk.

The pupils report that they feel very safe in school and that there is always someone to help them. They have a very clear understanding of how to keep fit and stay healthy. They participate keenly in the extended physical education sessions and work closely with the staff to ensure school meals are well balanced. Many have adjusted their packed lunches in the light of the school's guidelines. Because of their good progress in basic skills, in developing fluency in English, and their very positive attitudes to work, pupils are prepared well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Classrooms are lively and stimulating places to learn. Exciting displays reflect the pupils' many traditions and cultures as well as providing resources to support their learning. Teachers plan well to support the development of pupils' communication skills through interesting speaking and listening activities. In a good Year 2 lesson, for example, on planting and growing bean seeds, pupils were encouraged to provide instructions for others that reflected their practical experiences. Pupils learn well and co-operate with their teachers because working relationships are excellent and they know what is required of them. In the most successful lessons, there is a strong emphasis on helping pupils to judge their own work and that of their peers. Pupils talk knowledgeably about how tasks are marked and evaluated. Despite these good features, however, in some classes, pupils spend far too long on one activity or too lengthy periods 'on the carpet'. As a result, some pupils become distracted and restless.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A real strength of the curriculum is the way it reflects the very varied traditions of the pupils. There is a wide range of enrichment activities both within and outside of the school day. Besides exploring their family cultures, pupils have good opportunities to explore what it means to be a citizen of the United Kingdom and Europe. Technology weeks, music, French and German provide stimulating opportunities through which to explore many contemporary issues. 'Joseph's many-coloured coat', the Great Fire of London and healthy foods are among popular themes. Of the many out-of-hours excursions, the sleepover at the science museum is a clear favourite. There are still missed opportunities, however, to extend the language development of the most able through drama, debates, and public presentations.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Wolf Fields provides a very caring and safe environment so that pupils of all backgrounds can flourish. The excellent nurture is reflected in pupils' happy faces and obvious enjoyment in school life. Close links with external agencies ensure the many vulnerable children receive the attention they need. The school works exceptionally effectively with often hard-to-reach parents so that families, many of whom are new arrivals to the area, quickly grow to understand the local community. Support staff, drawn from the many cultural groups that make up Wolf Fields, are a potent force in allaying pupils' and parents' early fears of their new environments. Those at the early stages of learning English, those with difficult histories and those with specific learning challenges are well supported because the school rapidly and accurately assesses their needs.

Academic guidance is very rigorous and systematic. Pupils clearly understand how their work is evaluated and whether they are making as much progress as they should. The robust procedures, put in place since the last inspection, underpin the steady rise in pupils' performance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Whilst leadership and management are good overall, there are aspects that are outstanding. In particular, the headteacher provides excellent direction for the school. Since the last inspection, she has been relentless in developing the skills of the staff to make Wolf Fields 'the best it can be'. In this, she is supported well by the senior team and staff. The impact is evident in the steadily rising standards, in the school's strongly inclusive ethos in the face of an ever-changing population, and in the engagement of an increasing number of parents in school life. Very rigorous, albeit modest, self-evaluation is well rooted in all levels of the school. Wolf Fields has clearly demonstrated its good capacity to improve further.

Teachers and support staff are ambitious for their pupils and ensure they make the fastest possible progress in gaining fluency in English. Nevertheless, able pupils who spend all or most of their time at the school do not yet achieve as well in English as in mathematics and science. Despite very robust procedures to track pupils' performance and progress in Years 1 to 6, checks on how well children in the Nursery and Reception achieve are sometimes over generous.

Governance is good. Governors visit regularly and challenge and support the school well. There is a strong partnership with local support agencies and with parents. Opportunities such as the parents' literacy and numeracy groups are very successful in promoting their understanding of school systems and in nurturing a sense of belonging.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	1

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	1
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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

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

03 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wolf Fields Primary School, London, UB2 4JS

Thank you very much for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed your company. Above all, we were delighted to see your happy smiling faces and to know that you enjoy school and work hard in lessons.

We think you go to a good school. We know you agree with us because the school council was very clear that you are cared for exceptionally well and learn well in lessons. We were also impressed by how well you get on together, respect each other and the adults around you, and celebrate festivals together. You also tell us you feel very safe in school and that adults are always there to help you, even outside of school hours.

There are many things that are special about Wolf Fields. We would like to single out your headteacher and her senior team who have done so much to improve your school since inspectors visited last. You are very lucky to have such committed teachers and support staff. Because many of them have similar traditions to yourselves, you know they readily understand you and can help you and your families as needed. You get some really good opportunities to explore each others' cultures, often through the technology weeks and festival assemblies. You all experience what is expected of good citizens.

Before we left, we talked to your teachers about how Wolf Fields could be even better. They told us they will make sure that the most able among you have opportunities that allow them to reach the same standards in English as in mathematics and science. We also asked that the school help staff in the Nursery and Reception to improve further.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Nolan

Lead Inspector