

Welsh House Farm Community School and Special Needs Resources Base

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 103295 |
| Local Authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 308275 |
| Inspection dates | 4–5 March 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Arnalena Bee |

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 | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 200 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Matthew Gregson / Barbara Bowey |
| Headteacher | Caroline Cowan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 2 November 2003 |
| School address | Welsh House Farm Road Quinton Birmingham B32 2NG |
| Telephone number | 01214 644355 |
| Fax number | 01214 642307 |

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|--------------------------|----------------|
| Age group | 3–11 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Welsh House Farm is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school houses resourced provision for 20 pupils who have speech, language and communication needs including autism. All of these pupils have statements of special educational need. Just over half of the pupils come from White British backgrounds, and the proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than in other schools. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. When children start school, their levels of attainment are well below those expected for their ages particularly in language and communication skills. The number of pupils who leave and join the school at other than the normal times is well above average. The school serves an area that has high levels of socio-economic disadvantage.

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: 3

Welsh House Farm is a welcoming school that provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all that the school does. They feel that they are listened to if they have a problem and that they are well informed about their children's education. As one parent wrote, 'When you walk through the door you are always given a friendly welcome and made to feel part of the school community.'

The school is particularly successful in developing pupils' personal and social skills so that they get on well with each other and respect the adults who help them. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and almost all develop positive attitudes to learning. As a result, attendance has improved over the last three years to a satisfactory level. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Most pupils behave well and appreciate the support they receive. They take part in many physical activities such as hockey, skipping and other outdoor activities. Their understanding of the need for a healthy diet and exercise is excellent. Pupils are extremely proud of their recent Healthy Schools award. They contribute fully to the life of the school community through the school council and relate well to each other as prefects or, in the best lessons, as peer tutors, as well as raising funds for charities. Pupils are cared for well and given good pastoral support. Pupils with specific needs are well supported by external agencies. Parents are very happy with the care that their children receive. The satisfactory curriculum focuses well on pupils' personal, social and health education. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, they are well prepared personally for their next school, but their academic skills are not as strong.

The children in the Foundation Stage get off to a satisfactory start. Parents are pleased with how well they settle in and enjoy coming to school. Standards are well below average at the end of Years 2 and 6, and have been since the previous inspection. Contributory factors to the standards pupils reach are the above average percentage of pupils who use English as an additional language, the high proportion of pupils who are continually joining and leaving the school and the well above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall but good in mathematics. Pupils' progress is determined by the quality of teaching which is generally satisfactory, but ranges from inadequate to outstanding. The teaching is good in the two Resource Base classes and in Years 5 and 6. In the rest of the school, some lessons do not promote good learning because activities are not matched precisely enough to the needs of all pupils. Lessons are usually well organised, but this is not always the case. Relationships between pupils and staff are good, but in a few lessons teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour well enough and this affects pupils' learning.

Pupils receive satisfactory academic guidance. However, targets for improvement are not precise enough to help pupils move successfully to the next stage of learning. In some classes, pupils' work is marked well, giving them a clear indication of what they need to do to improve. In others, the marking does not provide pointers for improvement or help pupils understand how they can reach their targets.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and her staff have worked hard to ensure that pupils' development of good personal and social skills is maintained. Improvement since the previous inspection has been adequate and the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further. Nevertheless, monitoring of teaching and the work of the curriculum coordinators has not focused sharply enough on learning within lessons and achievement over

time. As a result, pupils' achievement is no better than satisfactory in most areas and standards continue to be too low.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children in the Foundation Stage are well behaved and are keen and eager to take part in the activities they are offered. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes come into school very happily. Their parents say that they are pleased with how quickly they settle in and how much they enjoy coming to school. Children do not reach the levels expected for their ages by the time they start in Year 1. Nevertheless, in relation to their starting points, their progress is satisfactory. They make good progress in developing personal and social skills. This is because the need to behave well and get on with each other is promoted well. As a result, Nursery children were seen during the inspection to move sensibly from their classroom to join the Reception children for an assembly. They thoroughly enjoyed a story called 'Good to be me' and listened well. The teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Activities are soundly planned and children are offered a good mix of activities, some of which they choose themselves and some are led by an adult. Reception children are beginning to read and write simple words by sounding them out. However, adults do not always make sure that tasks are accurately matched to the needs and abilities of all children. At other times in Reception, children are given too little guidance on how to form letters and numbers properly. All children, both in the Nursery and Reception, are looked after and cared for well whilst they are in school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching, ensuring that work is matched more closely to pupils' needs and provides them with sufficient challenge to raise their achievement and standards.
- Ensure that the school's senior leaders and curriculum coordinators monitor and analyse the quality of teaching and pupils' work more rigorously in order to identify areas for development which will help to improve achievement and standards.
- Set more precise targets for pupils and ensure that they are given clear indications of what they have to do to improve when marking their work.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as 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

In Year 6, standards are well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Despite this, pupils' achievement in relation to their starting points is satisfactory overall and good in mathematics. In Year 2, standards are well below average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The progress of pupils of all abilities varies as they move through the school because of differences in the quality of teaching. Pupils achieve well in the Resource Base classes and in Years 5 and 6 because they are taught well. When pupils from the Resource Base are integrated into mainstream classes, they are well supported and achieve as well as their peers. Pupils who have difficulties acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills make satisfactory progress. Appropriate support is given to pupils who speak English as an additional language and this enables them to make similar progress to the other pupils in their classes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual development is good and is enhanced by assemblies, religious education, working in the school garden and looking after school pets. Pupils have good relationships throughout the school. Their cultural awareness is developed well through activities such as listening to African music and visits from the chef that the school has adopted. He has not only taught them how to cook but also showed them dishes from different countries and where these countries are situated in the world. Older pupils also enjoyed a visit to the Gurdwara. They spoke very respectfully of this visit and of how much they learned from it. Pupils know that the school is a safe place and show a satisfactory awareness of safe practices as they identify potential dangers, such as electricity, in school and in their homes. They talk sensibly about road safety.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In Years 5 and 6 and the Resource Base, the teaching is consistently good and at times it is outstanding. In these classes, the teaching engages pupils well and enables them to make good progress, particularly in mathematics. The teachers manage their classes well and provide plenty of challenge. They also encourage pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers. In one lesson, for example, a pupil marked a friend's work and said, 'It doesn't make sense because you used the wrong connective.' In the rest of the school, the teaching is satisfactory. However, at times it lacks challenge and work is not matched accurately to pupils' needs. This restricts the more able pupils from achieving higher standards and lower attaining pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to complete their activities because they are too difficult. In some lessons, the management of pupils' behaviour is not rigorous enough and this leads to some disruption to learning, although relationships between teachers and pupils are usually good.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides sufficient time for pupils to develop basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), and the provision for ICT has improved since the previous inspection. The planning of the curricular opportunities in these subjects, however, does not always take sufficient account of the wide range of needs within each class. The Resource Base provision is good and enables pupils with specific difficulties to work through a tailor made curriculum that suits their individual needs. Cross-curricular links are good and reinforce and develop skills and knowledge taught in other subjects. There are some good opportunities for extra-curricular experiences through visits, such as those to an outdoor pursuits centre, and the wide range of clubs on offer. The school garden is beautifully set out and promotes learning in science and personal development as pupils learn how eating healthy fruits and vegetables, that they themselves grow, keeps them fit and healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are looked after and cared for very well. Thorough attention is given to health and safety arrangements. Good arrangements enable pupils to transfer to their next school easily. Pupils' personal and social needs are consistently promoted well. The school's procedures for setting targets and marking pupils' work are not rigorous enough to have a significant impact on improving standards and pupils' achievement. The targets that are given to pupils are not precise enough to enable them to improve sufficiently and move on. Teachers' marking does not always show pupils what they need to do to improve or to reach targets they are given.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to improving the school further. They do a particularly good job in focusing on pupils' personal development. Good partnerships with others outside school have been developed to promote learning in many areas. For example, a gardener comes into school to talk, work and give advice as pupils dig, plant and watch things grow. Priorities for improvement are clearly identified in the school development plan and the school's evaluation of itself is satisfactory. The systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are not rigorous enough and curriculum coordinators are not sufficiently involved in evaluating why standards are as they are in their areas of responsibility. Not enough action has been taken to improve the quality of teaching. Governors are involved in the work of the school and do support and challenge the school. They have a satisfactory idea of the strengths of the school but do not have a sufficiently good understanding of what needs to be improved.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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

| | |
|--|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| 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? | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 4 |
| 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? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 3 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| 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? | 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

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| 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 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 |

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

6 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Welsh House Farm Community School and Special Needs Resources Base,
Birmingham, B32 2NG

I am writing to let you know what we found out about your school when we came to visit you recently. Thank you for making us so welcome. We were pleased to hear how much you have learnt about the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. We know you are very proud of your Healthy Schools award.

These are the main things we found out about your school.

- You are all very well cared for and those who look after you at home agree.
- You have good opportunities to take part in out-of-school activities.
- The way the school is led and managed is satisfactory.
- You get on well with each other and with the adults who help you.
- Teaching is satisfactory and, in some classes, it is good.
- Exciting visitors, such as the chef and the gardener, are invited into school and make learning fun.
- Most of you work hard in lessons and behave well, but one or two of you sometimes let the side down.
- You all work hard raising money for people who are not as fortunate as you are.
- By the time you are in Year 6 you are sensible, polite children who take on jobs, such as being a prefect, very seriously.
- You make satisfactory progress as you move through the school.

We have asked the school to do three things to improve the education you receive.

- Make sure that teaching is always good so that you all make good progress.
- Make sure that your targets are more closely linked to what you need to do to improve and teachers provide you with clear advice on how to reach them.
- Make sure that the leaders for literacy, mathematics and science check how well you are doing in your work.

Keep working hard and having fun.

Best wishes

Nina Bee Lead inspector

6 March 2008

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Keep working hard and having fun.

Best wishes

Nina Bee
Lead inspector