

Wylde Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103349
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	308287
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Christine Field

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	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Clamp
Headteacher	Peter Barnett
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2004
School address	Green Lanes Sutton Coldfield B73 5JL
Telephone number	01213 732691
Fax number	01213 820950

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most of the pupils who attend this above-average size primary school live locally, come from privately owned homes and are from White British backgrounds. Just under a quarter of pupils are a range of ethnic minority backgrounds. Fewer pupils than seen nationally are entitled to free school meals. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides pupils with a good quality education. Very positive relationships, exemplary behaviour and good attendance are key indicators that reflect the pupils' enjoyment in coming to school. Pupils say they love school and identify the 'happy friendly relationships with one another' and 'interesting lessons' as just two of the things that make Wylde Green a good place to be. Most parents praise highly the rounded education their children receive and identify that 'it engenders a sense of cohesion and community'. A few parents expressed concerns about bullying at lunchtime. Inspectors found lunchtimes to be well supervised with 'play leaders' and the 'learning mentor' supporting very positive play.

From satisfactory beginnings in the Reception, pupils achieve well over their time in school and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. The results in the 2007 national tests for Year 6 pupils showed a dip in mathematics and science at the higher Level 5. The school has been working effectively to help more pupils to reach higher standards, particularly in mathematical investigation and problem solving. The work in pupils' books over the last three terms shows the more able learners making good progress in developing these skills and concepts. Occasionally, the level of challenge in the tasks set for the more able learners in other lessons is not demanding enough. This results in some not reaching the standard or producing the quality of work they should. In contrast, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make consistently good progress in lessons because of well thought out provision and effective support. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils with gifts and/or talents, and is moving in the right direction to improve further its effectiveness.

Teaching is good overall and enables the pupils to learn confidently, develop good basic skills and prepare well for the next phase of education and future careers. Pupils work with enthusiasm in their lessons because their work is usually well-planned and the activities capture their interest. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is very well integrated into lessons and is a positive feature in supporting pupils' successful learning. Marking and the use of targets are satisfactory but are not always used sufficiently well to support pupils' maximum progress. Pupils work from an exciting and innovative curriculum with very good enrichment from a wide range of 'added extras' that enhances personal experiences. Focus weeks such as 'Healthy Week' and 'Green Week' help them to learn how to keep safe and healthy and become active in promoting sustainable resources. Through their work as play leaders, being on the school council and part of action research projects, pupils are able to make a very positive contribution to their community.

Pastoral care is outstanding. The very close attention given by all staff to supporting and developing pupils' individual qualities is well reflected in their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils' appreciation of different cultures and valuing one another's differences are very much a part of the school's highly inclusive ethos and demonstrate its strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity. Academic guidance is good. A new IT-based system is being implemented to help schools leaders and teachers track pupils' progress more rigorously and to inject a higher level of challenge in target setting. Very strong leadership by the headteacher has resulted in clear improvement since the last inspection. School self-evaluation is a robust process and one well supported by effective action planning. Teamwork is a major strength and is a key factor in the school moving forward on a number of fronts. Between them, the headteacher and deputy headteacher observe teaching and learning, with subject leaders undertaking work sampling and data checks on standards. Subject leaders

are not yet building their evaluative skills through direct observation of lessons so they have a fuller view of the subject for which they are accountable. There is good capacity in the school's systems, processes and personnel to build on strengths and move forward on the areas identified for development. Governors are supportive and work actively to hold the school to account.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The provision made for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving. The newly appointed Foundation Stage leader has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses and a sensible action plan to drive improvement. Children's skills and ability on entry are broadly in line with those expected for their age and by the end of Reception, standards are broadly average. Children enjoy school and build good relationships with each other and adults. Pastoral care is a strength and this supports their good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Both the indoor and outdoor areas offer safe and secure areas of provision that foster the children's independent work and play. A good curriculum ensures that children have plenty of first-hand experiences, for example when cutting up fruit and making milk shakes. Children are soundly taught and make satisfactory progress. Personal learning needs are suitably met, with newly introduced accurate assessments now helping teachers to plan appropriate activities. Adults provide good role models for the children's language development, with a growing emphasis on phonics helping extend their reading and writing skills. However, more focus is required on extending the children's purposeful talk when they are working on self-selected tasks. Staff work hard to achieve a balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, though occasionally children sit for too long on the carpet and become restless. Good links exist between parents and feeder nurseries and these are being developed to improve further transition and induction.

What the school should do to improve further

- Move on the agreed plans to improve the Foundation Stage, particularly in raising the quality of teaching and learning so that children make better rates of progress.
- Inject a consistent level of challenge into the work and targets set by teachers for more able learners in mathematics and sharpen their focus on progress in marking.
- Extend the opportunities for subject leaders to observe the impact of teaching on learning in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From their average starting point, most pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Progress is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and good across Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards in English have improved since the last inspection but have risen more slowly in mathematics. Last year around a third of pupils did not achieve the expected level in mathematics, with far fewer pupils reaching the higher Level 5 than in English. The school has taken effective action to close the gap with English. The school's strategies have clearly brought advancement in pupils' mathematical investigative and problem solving skills. However, school improvement work is not yet complete. The challenge set in the work for the more able pupils is not always sufficient to ensure they make consistently good progress. Senior leaders make effective use of targets to raise expectations in core subjects, and the boost in standards predicted this year in Year 6 demonstrates their value. The school recognises that

extra challenge is required in the targets being set for more able learners in mathematics in all years in order that they maximise their full potential. The school has good plans in place to continue the focus on mathematics into 2009.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, and value the partner and teamwork in lessons, because 'it helps us solve problems in maths'. They build very good social skills, enjoy excellent relationships and use the opportunities to resolve occasional conflict well. Behaviour in lessons, assemblies and outside school is excellent. A Year 5 pupil said, 'there may have been bullying in the past, but it's all sorted now'. Pupils have a very positive understanding of race equality issues and are particularly sensitive to the feelings and opinions of others. As a result, a racially harmonious atmosphere prevails. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously; for instance, the school council are proud that they make a real difference to the school environment. Other pupils, too, feel they have a strong voice in school affairs. Pupils feel safe and secure, and know that any adult will help them if they have problems. They are adamant that this is a healthy school, and think the lunches are lovely, particularly the salad bar. They see the school's large range of after-school clubs as a good way to help them to become fit and healthy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is typically imaginative and interesting and results in pupils enjoying lessons and generally making good progress. All teachers use ICT very effectively to engage pupils' concentration and to ensure successful learning. Lessons are typically a hive of activity, with good use made of 'talking partners' to share ideas. Occasionally, there are times when teachers do not question rigorously enough to encourage more able pupils to extend their thinking or are content with brief responses. Marking is generally encouraging but is not consistently used to support pupils' next steps in learning in mathematics. There is good use of target setting to assist pupils' progress but these could have higher challenge for the more able mathematicians in some years. The support of teaching assistants has a positive impact on assisting group work, particularly in their support of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Sometimes their role beyond group activity support in lessons is too passive and this is a missed opportunity to help move learning forward.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad, balanced and of quality. Careful planning is given to personal, social and health education activities and these are enabling pupils to grow in maturity, being particularly effective in promoting their exemplary spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision made for gifted and talented pupils is a priority for further improvement, with sensible plans being implemented to achieve this. Pupils have an active voice in curriculum innovation. For example, they have evaluated provision in design and technology and identified ways to improve it. The school has well-forged links with a range of experts in the field who visit to share their experiences with pupils, for example, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra led an enjoyable Year 6 male voice singing session during

the inspection. The school engages with parents through exceptionally well attended 'Impact Workshops' and gives them insights into what their children are learning and why.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's care, guidance and support for its pupils are good overall. Therefore, pupils feel safe and well cared for, are happy in school and enjoy learning. Outstanding pastoral care ensures a warm and secure environment and supports pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and exemplary behaviour. The school's safeguarding systems are robust. Teachers are careful to ensure their pupils' protection and safety. All staff are trained in child protection matters and keep a watchful eye on pupils throughout the day. The school values the expertise from many outside agencies and uses this well to improve the progress and well-being of vulnerable pupils. Academic guidance is often very good but inconsistencies in practice mean that not all pupils receive the same level of regular good advice on how they can improve their work. The school is alert to the steps required for making this system even more effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher is providing very clear direction and is leading the school forward with a robust action plan based on accurate school self-evaluation. Together with the deputy headteacher, he has created an inclusive school ethos and, with the support of all staff, a very strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity. Teamwork is a strength that results in adults and pupils alike feeling valued and well supported. Senior leaders are good role models for teachers and are influential in driving forward improvements. Subject leaders undertake a range of monitoring activities; however, the school recognises that more work is required in extending their monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and progress in the subjects for which they are accountable. Governors are supportive of the school and take stock of its effectiveness, for example through their work with pupils about being safe and keeping healthy. They are growing in their role as good 'critical friends'. Accommodation has been improved significantly with clear benefit to the pupils, for example in the enhanced ICT resource. However, the hall space is still very tight for the size and numbers of pupils who use it. The school fosters good links with its community, outside agencies and other schools to the benefit of pupils' education.

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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

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

The quality of provision

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

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 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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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	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

19 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wylde Green Primary School, Sutton Coldfield B73 5JL

Thank you for your warm welcome when my team of inspectors visited your school. You told us it is a good school to come to, especially because everyone is so friendly and get on well together. We think so too. We were very pleased to see you play so positively together and really enjoyed having our lunch with you – what well-mannered children you are! Here are some of the other things we found out about your school that we thought you should know.

- The very youngest children in Reception classes make a sound start to school and are well prepared to move to Year 1 after the summer break. The school has some good ideas for making things better in Reception – so watch that space!
- Infant and junior pupils learn successfully and achieve good standards because they are well taught, activities are interesting and everyone works hard.
- You have a clear view about your personal targets and these are helping you to aim high, though we do feel that some of you who are really good at mathematics could have harder targets. Maybe you could let your teachers know if you feel you could be stretched a bit more?
- You feel happy and safe at school because all staff are caring and listen to any worries you have. This supports your excellent relationships with one another and superb behaviour.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors are leading the school very well and are doing their best to make the school even better. You may see more of some of them in classroom as they spend time checking up on just how well you are doing.

We are sure that you will continue to help your teachers by working hard and always doing your best work. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Christine Field Lead inspector