

Widney Junior School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 104054 |
| Local Authority | Solihull |
| Inspection number | 308494 |
| Inspection dates | 7–8 February 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Jim Henry |

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

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 231 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Paul Rogers |
| Headteacher | Kathryn Unsworth |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 May 2003 |
| School address | Clifton Crescent Solihull B91 3LQ |
| Telephone number | 01217 058516 |
| Fax number | 01217 091005 |

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|--------------------------|-------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Widney Junior School is situated in a residential area in Solihull. It is an averagesized school with a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and whose first language is not English are above the national averages. The majority of pupils come from White British families.

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

Widney Junior is a satisfactory school that is improving following the establishment of an effective senior management team. The headteacher and the newly appointed deputy headteacher, supported by the staff responsible for Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6, provide clear direction to the school. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, and by the end of Year 6, standards are above the national average. Overall standards and the progress pupils make have improved over the last two years and there is a strong commitment from staff for this to continue. Consequently, staff are working effectively to identify and provide support for those pupils who are not doing as well as they should and this is improving pupils' progress. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by the senior leadership team are not rigorous enough to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress. Pupils are happy at school and really enjoy their education because they feel that Widney is a pleasant place where adults value and care for them. Pupils behave well and have a strong sense of self-discipline. One pupil confidently said 'I think we did a good job setting up our class rules.' This is reflected in the good relationships between adults and pupils and the positive ethos in the school. Pupils clearly understand the importance of living a healthy lifestyle, and a range of after-school activities gives them the opportunity to take part in sports and other clubs. Older pupils readily act as mentors to those learning English as an additional language and recognise the importance of assisting others. There is an active school council. However, the school recognises that pupils could play a greater part in decision making in the education provided for them. The basic skills that pupils acquire provide them with a good foundation for their future education. The curriculum supports this by offering a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to develop their abilities to think and solve problems. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good aspects. The careful planning of lessons and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) engage pupils successfully in their learning. On occasions, some do not do well enough in lessons because they are unclear about what they are expected to learn. Whilst work is marked conscientiously, opportunities are sometimes missed to inform pupils about how well they are doing and how they could improve their work further. The governors are supportive and provide satisfactory challenge and accountability. They visit on a regular basis and are well informed. Through the efforts of the progress and standards group, governors are beginning to have a greater impact on improving standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen the monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress.
- Give all pupils clear guidance through marking and the use of targets to help them know how to improve.
- Develop opportunities for pupils to take additional responsibilities in the life of the school and in the education provided for them. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged 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

Pupils enter the school with above average attainment. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above the national average and the progress pupils make is satisfactory. Following a decline in attainment in 2005, standards and pupils' progress have improved over the past two years. However, in 2007, attainment in English was lower than in mathematics and science because fewer pupils gained the higher Level 5. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics in the different age groups across the school. Where pupils make good progress, they know their targets, how well they are doing in working towards them and how to improve further. While this was evident in the older pupils' classes, it is not consistent across the school. The progress made by different groups of pupils, such as those with English as an additional language or those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is also satisfactory because of the effective extra support given by the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' behaviour and attitude in lessons are good and they generously celebrate the attributes and achievements of their peers. Relationships are good and, as a result, pupils feel safe in school and have confidence in the staff to deal quickly with any problems or concerns they may have. Pupils work well together and cite interesting lessons and good friends as reasons for enjoying school. In a response to the parental questionnaire, one parent wrote, 'He looks forward to going to school rather than counting down the days to the weekend!' Pupils' spiritual and moral development is good, with the older pupils readily acting as mentors to younger pupils who need help or support. Pupils take regular exercise, enjoy sports and other clubs, in particular the Indian dance club. Pupils' attendance is above average, although a significant number have their learning disrupted by being taken on holiday during school terms. There is an active school council and a group of playtime leaders. Pupils are also responsible for managing the library and producing a newsletter but overall, they are not given sufficient opportunity to be fully involved in the life of the school. They have good basic skills on leaving the school and are well prepared for their future education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some real strengths both across the school and in particular classes. The focus throughout the school on developing the pupils' learning skills and celebrating success adds considerably to pupils' ability to work together confidently to solve problems. Work is matched satisfactorily to individual needs and in some classes, teachers use regular assessment to adjust planning so that all pupils are properly supported and challenged. However, this is not consistent, with the result that progress across year groups and through the school is variable. While teachers mark work diligently, this varies in its effectiveness, with good guidance for pupils in how to improve their work in some, but not all classes. In some classes, pupils assess their own work and that of their peers, which helps to motivate them to do well. Most teachers work closely with parents on the sharing of tasks between home and school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum develops the pupils' learning skills effectively and consistently. Subject coordinators work closely with senior leaders to plan lessons that help pupils build well on their previous learning. Some teachers use their assessment of pupils' work well to adapt the curriculum to match pupils' needs and help them learn effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from well planned small group sessions that support and enhance their learning. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, with appropriate emphasis on the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects. Pupils are well informed about health and safety in all activities, for example, in the 'Imagineering' club, where they learn to handle tools safely. The curriculum is planned well to give pupils an understanding of other cultures and faiths and prepare them for life in a multicultural society. The annual charities week helps them to contribute to the wider community and the range of clubs and activities outside lessons is good, particularly in sport.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is a strength of the school and this is reflected in the good relationships between staff and pupils. 'I like my teachers because they look after me' was a comment made by one young pupil. Procedures for safeguarding are in place and pupils enjoy coming to school, with the majority feeling safe and having the confidence to speak to adults in the school if they have a problem. Healthy eating, taking plenty of exercise, and taking part in the provision of extra-curricular sporting activities are actively encouraged by the school. Guidance for pupils about their work is satisfactory overall but is inconsistent across the school. Most pupils know their targets, especially in the older classes, but not all fully understand what they have to do to improve their work. Teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously and with praise for achievements, but there are missed opportunities to reinforce pupils' targets and to give them guidance on how to improve. The school works effectively with other agencies, such as the Education Welfare Office and School Nurse service, to support and guide pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

By involving the new and effective deputy headteacher, the headteacher has established a management team that works well together and has a real commitment to improving the school. Self-evaluation is satisfactory and the headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear view of the school's priorities. Staff have successfully embraced new initiatives, for example, the 'Making Good Progress' project that is designed to increase pupils' progress. The school is working with the numeracy and literacy consultants from the local authority to improve the provision in mathematics and English. The management team, in conjunction with the subject leaders for English and mathematics, is beginning to have an impact on improving standards and the progress that pupils make. A system for tracking pupils' progress is in place, with intervention groups to tackle any underachievement, and this is raising standards. While monitoring of teaching and learning occurs, it is not rigorous enough. The school has plans to develop further the formal monitoring of lessons but this has yet to take place. The governors

visit the school on a regular basis. They are supportive, well informed and hold the school to account satisfactorily.

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

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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? | 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 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 | 2 |
| 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

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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 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 | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 3 |
| 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? | 3 |
| 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? | 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 |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

- 11 February 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Widney Junior School, Solihull, B91 3LQ I am writing to thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed sharing in your lessons and watching you work hard for your teachers. The headteacher and her deputy headteacher, together with all the other staff and adults who look after you, work hard to help you learn and enjoy school. The school gives you a sound education and you reach above average standards by the time you leave. Here are some of the things that the school does well.
- You behave well and are keen to do your best.
- You treat each other with respect and are always willing to help around the school.
- You enjoy taking part in the different activities that the school provides.
- All your teachers and other staff work hard to try to make sure that you do well at school. To help your school make sure you do even better, we have asked staff to do three things:
- make sure teachers look more carefully and more often at the lessons they teach so that you make good progress in all your classes
- when teachers mark your work, give you consistently good advice and guidance on how to improve it
- give you more opportunities to contribute to the work of the school and the education provided for you. You can help by supporting one another and continuing to work hard for your teachers. I am sure you will carry on making Widney Junior School a happy place to learn. Good luck for the future. Yours sincerely Jim Henry Lead inspector



11 February 2008

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Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jim Henry
Lead inspector