

Wellfield Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106313
Local Authority	Trafford
Inspection number	309092
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Susan Walsh

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs M Philips
Headteacher	Mrs J Irving
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2004
School address	Church Lane Sale Cheshire M33 5QG
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This infant and nursery school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, but the proportion who have a statement of special educational need is above average. This is because the school has resourced provision for pupils with social and communication difficulties. The school has many awards including Anti-Bullying Silver, Inclusion, Healthy Schools Gold and Race Equality Gold.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils love to come because they are well cared for and have lots of interesting things to do. Exciting activities in lessons, a good variety of visits and visitors and good opportunities to be involved in clubs all boost pupils' enthusiasm for school. Parents and pupils appreciate the super provision for music. A typical comment expressed by parents, 'My child loves every single day at Wellfield,' accurately reflects pupils' outstanding enjoyment of school. This enjoyment is also illustrated by good attendance rates and pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are very proud of their school and they are tremendously keen to contribute to the school community. Parents are pleased with the pleasant, hospitable atmosphere and the caring nature of the school, typically saying that, 'The school has a friendly welcoming atmosphere, from the office staff through to the headteacher.'

When children enter the Nursery classes their standards are similar to national expectations. By the end of Year 2 they achieve well to reach standards that are above the national average. Not only has good achievement been secured, but pupils' personal development is well catered for and each individual child, whatever their ability or level of need, is valued and nurtured. The school has good links with parents, the local community, other schools and external agencies, and these are used well to support pupils' personal development and learning. The good programme for personal, social and health education ensures that pupils are well informed about how to keep healthy and safe. Pupils' above average academic standards, combined with their very constructive attitudes, result in them being well placed for being successful in life.

Children get off to a flying start in the Nursery, but children's progress in the Reception class is not as rapid. This is because when children are working at activities they have chosen for themselves there is too much variation in the frequency and quality of adult intervention. Also, the activities themselves are not always challenging enough. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress because of consistently good teaching. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress because they are well supported. Parents are understandably delighted with the high quality resourced provision for pupils with social and communication difficulties. This comment from a parent of a child in the small specialist class was representative of many: 'He is a different child since he started, he now has friends and is a valued member of the class.'

The headteacher's strong leadership has been instrumental in ensuring that the school provides a positive, supportive environment where all pupils can flourish. Although the whole staff team make a contribution, the headteacher has been the main driving force in securing pupils' good achievement and personal development. Leaders, including governors, are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development, and there are well laid plans for improvements. The school has very detailed information that pinpoints pupils' standards at regular intervals, but this information is not always used to effectively measure pupils' progress. In addition, whole-school targets set for pupils are not always challenging enough.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's skills on entry are similar to those expected nationally of children of their age, although many children have good social skills. Children have achieved well by the time they join Year 1. They usually reach standards that are above expectations and, in 2007, both boys

and girls exceeded national expectations in all areas of learning. Provision in the Nursery is outstanding. There is a tremendously exciting curriculum where children are able to instigate activities, show initiative and make decisions. The activities themselves are exceptionally well planned, purposeful and engage children incredibly well. The theme during the inspection was a camping trip and the children enjoyed this hugely. Adult intervention is of a very high quality and develops children's thinking and their language skills. In the Reception class teaching is of more variable quality and there is sometimes insufficient adult support and intervention in child-initiated activities. The activities provided are not as exciting and challenging as those in the Nursery and do not move learning on at the same pace. The introduction of a formal programme to link sounds and letters is helping to develop children's skills in reading and writing. Children are very well cared for in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Parents report their children are extremely happy; a typical comment being 'My child runs into school every morning without looking back.' At present the Foundation Stage is managed by the headteacher who is well aware of where the areas for development lie and is planning for improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that activities in the Reception classes are sufficiently challenging and are appropriately supported by high quality adult intervention.
- Use data more effectively to analyse the rates at which pupils make progress, and to set challenging whole-school targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2, although there are small variations in the rates of progress across different classes. Standards have been above average for several years with many pupils reaching the higher levels. Standards are usually higher in reading and mathematics than in writing. Pupils make particularly good progress in reading. Achievement in writing is improving and standards are creeping up but progress in this area, especially for boys, is still slightly slower than in other subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress both academically and personally. Pupils with social and communication difficulties who are catered for in the small specialist class make especially good progress because of the very effective provision.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Social development is a real strength and pupils develop into confident and articulate young people who are keen to support each other and their school. They make an outstanding contribution to the school community and are proud to carry out jobs like being the teachers' personal assistant. They support each other well, both in class and in the playground, often showing considerable maturity for their age. Their extensive involvement in music in the community is helping them to spread their wings. Pupils' behaviour is very good in the classroom. They are enthusiastic learners who work very well together. Occasionally there is some boisterous behaviour in the playground, particularly at lunchtime. Nevertheless, pupils know how to keep safe. A minority of parents expressed concerns about bullying. However, most pupils say they have lots of friends. They say that

'falling out is rare' and when they do fall out they soon 'get back together again'. They are very confident that teachers will quickly address any problems they have.

Even the youngest children in the Reception class are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles; for example, a child remarked spontaneously, 'It's important to drink water in hot weather.' Pupils of all ages enjoy the morning 'wake up and shake up' sessions. Those who have social and communication issues or physical difficulties are fully included and every pupil has a lot of fun while they are taking exercise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers successfully use well directed questions to challenge pupils and develop their learning. Many teachers use resources imaginatively to make learning fun. Interactive whiteboards are used well to add interest and to make explanations clear. Relationships between teachers and pupils are particularly warm. Pupils know that their contributions will be both welcomed and valued, and this boosts their self-confidence. Plentiful opportunities for pupils to work together and in pairs help them learn how to cooperate and to collaborate. There are occasions when the pace of pupils' learning slows as they are expected to listen to the teacher for too long, and inevitably some lose concentration. Classroom assistants are sometimes underused during introductions but they make a very good contribution to supporting the less able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities during group work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has developed a good curriculum with a strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT). Improvements to the science curriculum, with better planning for continuity and progression and a greater emphasis on learning through practical experiences, are helping to raise standards in science. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and for the less able pupils is very good indeed, but occasionally work is not finely matched to the needs of the more able pupils. Pupils enjoy the good range of clubs, including the very good provision for music. The school ensures that it gives pupils plenty of opportunities to broaden their experiences through trips to local places of interest. Strong partnerships with other local schools help the school to enhance its curriculum; for example, it is able to extend opportunities for pupils to become involved in sport through its links with the local high school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good quality care, guidance and support makes a significant contribution to pupils' good academic achievement and personal development. The school provides a high quality environment where pupils thrive. Staff, including the headteacher, know pupils very well indeed and offer high standards of individual support to pupils and their families. Pupils know that there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem and parents are appreciative of the approachability of staff. The school is very good at supporting vulnerable pupils and works well with external agencies. Child protection procedures are robust. All staff are very caring and committed. The school provides a safe and supportive environment and the procedures designed

to promote health and safety are satisfactory. Teachers' marking usually tells pupils how to improve their work. All Key Stage 1 teachers set targets for individual pupils which are also shared with the parents. However, the use of whole-school targets is inconsistent. The school has extensive information about pupils' academic standards but does not always use this information as effectively as it could to measure differences in pupils' rates of progress and to set challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher is pivotal to the good leadership and management in the school and the promotion of good achievement and personal development. She has a very heavy workload at present and takes the lead role in managing many aspects of the school. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including the resourced provision, is very well managed, but currently too few members of staff have management responsibilities that impact on achievement in subjects or key stages. The school has recognised that other staff need to be involved in monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and is helping more staff to develop these important skills. The school has good capacity to improve, as is demonstrated through the good improvements to standards in science and steady improvements to standards in writing.

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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	2
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	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	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 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	3
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	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

It was a delight and a privilege to inspect your school. The inspection team really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. You go to a good school. It's clear that you have a really good time at school because of all the fun things you are able to do. It was nice to hear about all the super things the choir has done lately including singing in such impressive places. Well done to everyone involved!

We also thought you were very well informed about how to keep healthy and safe. Your behaviour is good. You have good manners and make visitors very welcome but a minority of boys can be a bit silly in the playground at lunchtimes. You told us that your teachers look after you well and that they always try to help you. Children in the Nursery have a terrific time at school and are doing well because of good teaching but we noticed that things aren't quite as good in the Reception classes. We have asked the staff to make sure that children in the Reception class always have exciting things to do and get more help to move their learning on.

You are making good progress and by the end of Year 2 you are reaching standards that are above those usually expected for children of your age. This is because you and your teachers work very hard. We noticed that those of you who find school work hard are very well supported and make good progress.

The managers in your school are doing a good job. They have lots of information about how you are doing at school and we have asked them to look more carefully at some of that information in order to help them manage the school, and to make sure that the targets set for each one of you really help you to make progress.

Thank you again for being such good company.