

Wigan St Andrew's CofE Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106449
Local Authority	Wigan
Inspection number	309131
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Arthur Markham

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	
Headteacher	Mrs Wendy Massey
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2004
School address	Mort Street Springfield Wigan Lancashire WN6 7AU
Telephone number	01942 244354
Fax number	-

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school serves a mixed area with pupils coming from a range of social backgrounds. The number of pupils claiming free school meals is below that in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is around average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British background with only a very small number from minority ethnic groups. Three pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The school has achieved the Activemark. A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.

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, which provides good value for money. Pupils really enjoy their learning and talk excitedly about the school, saying they like their teachers because they are kind and help them to learn. Parents rate it highly and are pleased that their children enjoy school so much. They find the staff very approachable and helpful and are particularly pleased at the good level of pastoral care provided for their children. 'The school is like one big happy family.' typifies the views of many.

From the Foundation Stage onwards, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Standards in reading throughout the school are good and reflected in national test results, which have been improving slightly over the last four years at both Year 2 and Year 6. By the end of Year 6, standards in national tests are generally significantly above average overall. This situation is being maintained, the school's tracking data and the work of the current pupils showing that standards are well above average in all three subjects. Lively teaching and the close attention given to stimulating pupils to want to learn, by making the curriculum relevant and interesting, are major factors in their good achievement. Classrooms are quiet, industrious places with pupils displaying very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils' progress is closely tracked and assessment used well to ensure that lesson planning matches their needs. Good use of teaching assistants enables close attention to be given to meeting the needs of any pupil seen to be underachieving. However, the academic guidance they are given has some limitations. Although they are set long term targets, the use of short term targets to support these is not developed and teachers' marking does not consistently give pointers to help them understand how to improve.

Pupils' personal development is a further important factor in their good academic achievement. Relationships are very good and the school has a warm and friendly atmosphere. Close attention is given to developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem. As a result pupils respond admirably to the staff's high expectations by behaving in an exemplary manner. They show increasing maturity as they go through the school and take on a range of responsibilities enthusiastically. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for healthy lifestyles and say they feel safe and well cared for. They are involved in the wider community, for example, singing at the local church, and play an active part in the life of the school through the work of the school council. Their good basic skills and positive attitudes prepare them well for the future.

Leadership and management are good. Since her appointment the headteacher has quickly instigated changes that have been appreciated by the staff, who welcome her clear vision and share her determination to raise standards. The school's self-evaluation is accurate even though monitoring and evaluating systems are not yet fully developed. This limits senior leaders' capacity to further improve the quality of teaching and subject coordinators' capacity to impact on standards in their subject. However, the strong emphasis given to linking performance management to school priorities is having a positive impact. Governors are involved in the life of the school and carry out their responsibilities well. The issues identified at the last inspection have been effectively addressed and, taking account of the strong teamwork evident in the school and the systems and procedures recently introduced by the new headteacher, the school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year). They enter with skills similar to those typical for their age although slightly weaker in language and literacy and, as a result of the effective teaching, progress well. By the end of Reception the vast majority reach the national expectations for their age and a good number exceed them. Leadership and management are good and staff work well together. Parents appreciate the effective induction arrangements that enable children to quickly settle. Assessment procedures are well organised and children's progress closely checked. The curriculum is good with all areas of learning catered for well in the secure and stimulating environment. Close attention is given to developing effective learning habits and providing a good balance of teacher led and independent activities. Children are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy learning, moving quickly to independent activities and working and playing together well. They respond very positively to the warm and caring approach of staff and display growing self-esteem and confidence. Although significant improvements have been made to the outdoor area this is not always used as well as it could be to extend children's learning experiences.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance by senior leaders in order to support improvement.
- Develop the role of subject coordinators to enable them to take a more active role in improving standards.
- Set pupils individual targets in English, mathematics and science and ensure that teachers' marking relates to them to give pupils clear guidance as to how they can improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Throughout the school pupils make good progress because effective teaching stimulates them to want to learn. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards that are above average in reading and writing, and broadly average in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, standards in English and science are well above average and slightly above average in mathematics. A dip in standards in 2006 as a result of fewer pupils than usual reaching the higher Level 5 was tackled well. The school introduced new tracking procedures to ensure that pupils were suitably challenged and support given to any pupil seen to be underachieving. As a result standards rose in 2007 and the work of the current pupils indicates that standards are once again well above average. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress because their needs are identified accurately and they are supported well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their enjoyment of school is reflected by their good attendance. They talk enthusiastically about all the interesting, fun things that the school provides, especially 'Friday Fun', where they participate in a wide range of activities. Their behaviour is excellent and they are keen to do well. Whilst a strong emphasis is given to developing their understanding of the Christian faith, pupils also learn about other religions and cultures to ensure that they are well

prepared for life in a multicultural society. Pupils take their day-to-day responsibilities seriously. Playground leaders look after younger pupils well, organising games to ensure that everyone has someone to play with at lunchtimes. The school council contributes well to decision making and is pleased with the improvements made to the outside environment as a result of their suggestions. They develop good enterprise and financial skills by organising events and keeping accounts of funds raised to support a school in Kenya. Their understanding of the need for a healthy diet and physical exercise is clearly evidenced by their choices at lunchtime and in the school's recent acquisition of the Activemark. Pupils leave school as mature, confident individuals with personal and academic skills that prepare them well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan their lessons well to meet the needs of pupils. Learning intentions are clearly shared with pupils and often returned to at the end of lessons to involve pupils in assessing their understanding. The good use of interactive whiteboards and practical approaches really engage pupils' interest and add to their enjoyment of learning. The brisk pace generated in lessons by lively teaching and stimulating question and answer sessions support pupils' learning effectively. As a result, pupils concentrate well, work hard and take pride in presenting their work neatly. Teachers make good use of assessment to monitor pupils' progress and deploy learning support staff well to ensure that pupils of all abilities, including those with additional learning needs, achieve well. However, on occasions, during introductions to lessons that are too long, supporting adults are not always used as effectively as they could be.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum effectively meets the needs of all its pupils. Whilst close attention is given to the basic skills in English and mathematics, other subjects such as art, history and information and communication technology (ICT) are beginning to be linked together in a thematic approach to make learning more relevant and exciting for pupils. This is presenting pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and use their good ICT, literacy and numeracy skills to support their learning in other subjects. However, on occasions this is limited by the use of copied text and worksheets. Pupils' personal development is supported well by the good programme of personal, social and health education. They talk enthusiastically about the many well attended after-school clubs, which effectively develop a range of skills and talents. Visits and visitors to the school effectively enhance the curriculum and extend pupils' learning experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for in a very happy and welcoming environment. Relationships are very good and pupils feel valued as individuals. They say they feel safe and know there is always someone to help sort out any worries they have. Child protection procedures are in place and all other systems to safeguard pupils' health, safety and well-being meet requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effectively supported to ensure that they are fully involved in all activities. Good links with outside agencies provide extra specialist support

when needed. Academic guidance is not as effective. Recently introduced tracking systems monitor the progress of pupils' achievement closely, but pupils are not set individual short term targets and marking does not consistently give sufficient guidance to help them improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school well and is given good support by her deputy and the recently formed senior leadership team. They are effectively taking on their new responsibilities and a strong team approach is clearly evident within the staff. The staff and governors appreciate the systems and procedures that have been introduced to ensure that pupils achieve well. School strategic planning has been revised and gives a clear focus on raising standards. A new system for tracking the progress made by pupils is being used effectively to ensure that pupils are suitably challenged. The work of support staff has been revised to effectively meet the needs of pupils. Finances are carefully managed and resources well deployed. However, senior staff and subject coordinators have had little opportunity to monitor lessons in order to determine what needs to be done to further improve teaching and raise standards. Governors are involved in the life of the school and closely monitor its work. This enables them to provide a good balance of challenge and support to school leaders.

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	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	3
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	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

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

Inspection of Wigan St Andrew's Church of England Junior and Infant School, Wigan, WN6 7AU

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and getting your views. It was a pleasure to hear how much you like your teachers and enjoy school. Many of you said it was a good school and we agree.

We particularly liked the friendly atmosphere and the way the staff take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy. Many of you told us how much you enjoy school because you like your teachers and the wide range of exciting activities that make learning interesting for you so that you do well. We were delighted at the way you become progressively more mature as you progress through the school and the way that older pupils take care of the younger ones. Your excellent behaviour and the way you work hard for your teachers are the main reasons that you make good progress and achieve well. It was also pleasing to hear how aware you were of the importance of a healthy diet and the need to take part in physical activities, so that you know how to keep fit and healthy, when we talked to some of you at lunchtime.

During your time at school your achievement and progress are good and, by the end of Year 6, you reach standards that are well above average. However, your headteacher and all the teachers are keen to do all they can to help you to do even better. To support this we have asked them to ensure that you are set targets that clearly tell each of you what the next steps are in your learning. We have also asked them to ensure that when they mark your books teachers give clear advice, which helps you understand how you can improve your work. Finally, we have asked them to closely examine how well you are doing in lessons to identify any areas that need to be improved. You can help by continuing to work as hard as you were doing in the lessons we observed.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. You are lucky to go to such a warm and friendly school. We wish you well and good luck for the future.