

Wrenthorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108226
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	309628
Inspection date	10 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Joe Peacock

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	251
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Julie Winn
Headteacher	Mr Gordon Nash
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 1998
School address	Imperial Avenue Wrenthorpe Wakefield West Yorkshire WF2 0LW
Telephone number	01924 303775
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: standards and pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6, especially in writing and mathematics; the quality of teaching and support for the more able and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and if subject leaders are effectively improving provision and raising standards in Years 3 to 6. Evidence was gathered from meetings with the headteacher, some subject leaders, governors and pupils; visits to every classroom; the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents, as well as an analysis of the parent questionnaires that were returned to school. Some aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is situated in a residential village on the outskirts of Wakefield and is average in size. Numbers have fallen significantly since the previous inspection and it is expected that this trend is set to continue. Most pupils are of White British heritage with less than five per cent coming from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are below average.

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 that is giving good value for money. The headteacher and all staff set a superb example to pupils in how to be friendly, thoughtful and caring. Consequently, the pupils look after each other really well so that when an infant pupil fell on the playground, a junior pupil immediately looked after her. Asked if it was her job, she replied, 'No. I was just the nearest.' Staff work effectively as a team, showing an equal determination to do their best for all the pupils in their care and to raise standards. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above average attendance.

The school is generally accurate in assessing the different aspects of its performance. It does however, recognise that standards at the end of Year 6 fluctuate year on year, depending very much on the different make up of each cohort and their starting points. Last year, standards dipped at the end of Year 6 but the latest assessment data clearly shows that current standards are on course to rise this year with pupils achieving well above average standards in English and science.

Overall, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 are above average. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of the good quality of teaching they receive. The school's effective deployment of teaching assistants to support pupils who find learning difficult ensures that they too make good progress.

Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average overall. Pupils continue to make good progress in English and science from Years 3 to 6. Standards are well above average by Year 6 in English. This is the result of a strong emphasis being given to raising standards in pupils' writing. Well above average standards are also being achieved in science but standards in mathematics are broadly average. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory. The school acknowledges that it will not meet its challenging targets for mathematics and raising standards has been identified as a key focus for improvement. In some mathematics lessons the activities planned are not closely enough matched to pupils' capabilities and do not provide sufficient challenge, especially for the more able. As a result, taking into account their starting points, their progress although satisfactory is not as good as it should be.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are courteous and respectful. Their behaviour in and around the school is outstanding and all show very positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles and are involved in many fundraising activities which support the local community. The school council are proud of their achievements, managing their budget carefully and acting responsibly when giving out their special certificates to reward other pupils' achievements. The school makes good provision for the Foundation Stage, enabling children in Reception to settle well to school life and so they make a good start to their learning.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are a key strength and most pupils have an excellent attitude towards their learning. Teachers make good use of modern technology to support pupils' learning. For example, Year 3 demonstrated skills well in advance for their age when setting up a video conference with personnel in London and creating special thank you letters after a museum visit. These types of activity prepare the pupils well for their future learning.

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory with some strengths such as the much improved curriculum for English and the range of exciting after-school activities. Improving curriculum planning for

English, a previous high priority, has resulted in much higher English standards and this initiative has been most successful. The school has now recognised that a complete review of the mathematics curriculum is required as standards are not high enough, particularly for the more able pupils. In some of the mixed-age classes the mathematics curriculum does not always adequately meet the needs of the different ages and ability levels of pupils. Consequently, pupils do not make the good progress they are capable of.

Parents' views about the school are positive. They appreciate the good level of care and support their children receive. A few think that the school does not seek their views or take account of their suggestions but this view is not supported by most. The school has good relationships with parents and good procedures to handle any parents' concerns. Staff know their pupils well and most set challenging individual targets for them in English and mathematics. The caring support and clear guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a major factor enabling these pupils to make good progress.

Leadership and management are good. The school benefits from the combined experience and expertise of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. They lead the school well, working as an effective team. The management of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a particular strength, making very effective use of staff who support pupils in class or in special tuition groups. All subject leaders carefully monitor pupils' progress and have long-established procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning by observing one another's lessons. Governors are very supportive and keen to help to evaluate school performance in order to bring about further improvement. They are knowledgeable about all aspects of the school and are quickly developing their procedures for evaluating school effectiveness. The significant improvement in standards in English, and the determination shown by staff to improve the mathematics curriculum and pupils' achievements, show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter Reception with skills that are broadly typical for their age but their speaking skills are not as far advanced as those in other areas. The good quality of teaching and the wide range of challenging and exciting activities ensure that all make good progress. Sensitive care, support and guidance underpin the development of children's personal and social skills and their growing ability to be independent. For example, children enjoy taking on the role of teacher and use the computer-linked smartboard confidently to spell words. Those creating a caterpillar carefully and accurately followed a colour sequence for its body and drew two legs for each segment. All children work sensibly with one another and their progress in this area of their development is generally very good.

School records show that almost all children achieve the targets expected of them in all areas of learning by the end of their Reception year with a significant proportion exceeding them. Children benefit from the close attention provided by the teacher and teaching assistants as they learn. They listen attentively and are keen to answer questions. Learning is made fun and this encourages them to communicate with one another and successfully develop their speaking skills. The classroom is very spacious and is used well to provide a good range of stimulating learning areas. The well planned and spacious outdoor area ensures that children have fun playing on trikes or digging in the huge gravel and sand pits. Learning is to the same good quality as that provided in the classroom. Activities such as colouring in pictures in the writing corner or digging sand and gravel are enjoyable but are not always linked to the class topic to

promote learning more effectively. The Foundation Stage is well managed with staff working efficiently as a team to meet the needs of children in their care.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and pupils' achievement in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, especially for the more able.
- Ensure that the curriculum for mathematics meets the needs of pupils more closely, particularly in the mixed-age classes.

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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	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?	3
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	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

Inspection of Wrenthorpe Primary School, Wakefield, WF2 0LW

I really enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and for making me feel so welcome. You will be pleased to know that Wrenthorpe is a good school.

You are lucky to have so much space in your school. I think that your information and communication technology suite is probably the biggest I have seen and your library is impressive. In Reception, there is plenty of room for you to play in your flower shop or to build things with the large wooden blocks. I liked the outdoor area and could see how much fun you had pedalling your trikes or digging in the big sand and gravel pits. There was even the space for someone to lie peacefully on the carpet and enjoy reading a book. I can see why everyone does so well in this class.

Those of you in the infant and junior classes certainly live up to the words in your school song; 'take pride in the things we do, learning together and having fun'. It was good of the cheerleaders to put on the special performance at the end of assembly. I was very impressed with their routine. You can be proud of all the money you have raised through your fundraising events. And it's not only those in the Year 4/5 class who are the 'smart, hardworking friendly bunch'. All of you are! I thought your behaviour was outstanding in lessons and around school. You all seem to get on very well with one another and with your teachers. All of you make good progress as you move through the school in reading, writing and science and this is because all the staff are working so hard to make sure that you have lots of new things to learn. Concentrating on improving your writing has paid off well and now it is time to concentrate on mathematics in Years 3 to 6 so that you make better progress and reach higher standards. I have asked teachers to make sure that they always give you work that makes you concentrate and think hard in mathematics lessons. It is so important that all of you continue to try your best.

The school takes special care of you all and is quick to support you if you need help. It is good that you know what your targets for learning are and that you help to assess how well you are achieving them. Your headteacher is leading the school well and governors and staff are all working hard to make sure that you enjoy school. Your good attendance shows that they are succeeding. I hope that you will carry on trying your best in everything you do to make your school even better.