

Wildridings Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109941
Local Authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	310150
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Jonathan Palk HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	306
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	52
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Sly
Headteacher	Miss J Evans
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Netherton Bracknell RG12 7DX
Telephone number	01344 425483
Fax number	01344 360988

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wildridings is a larger than average primary school with an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that admits children from the age of 3 years part time. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There is a very small minority of pupils of other ethnic groups. Very few pupils are learning English as an additional language. The school admission number has been reduced formally by the LA in recent years and this has resulted in some mixed year group teaching in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 4. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties is above average, and a few pupils have a statement of special educational need and require intensive individual support for their specific learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The current lead co-headteacher took full responsibility for the school in September after a period of mentored co-headship from the former headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. Its overall effectiveness is inadequate and the school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the quality of teaching and learning.

Recent changes to the way the school is led and managed are beginning to bear fruit. As a result, the school currently provides an acceptable quality of education for its pupils. There are particular strengths in the pastoral care for children and pupils that lead to strong personal development and well-being. The recently appointed headteacher has a clear view of strengths and areas where the school is underperforming and along with a newly emerging management team has begun to take positive steps to secure the necessary improvements. The action taken to support higher expectations of older pupils has had a good impact on pupils' achievements.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they reach average standards by the time they leave Year 6. Children in the EYFS do not make a good enough start in their development and learning in communication, language and literacy and problem solving, reasoning and number. Whilst the adults encourage children's interests they do not manage their learning adequately. Consequently, children leave reception with skills that are below expectations in these areas. Overall teaching and learning is unsatisfactory and not good enough to address the gaps in pupils' writing and mathematics skills, as they move through the school. Through Years 1 to 4 assessment information is not used effectively to ensure that all pupils are set work which is sufficiently challenging and it is not until Years 5 and 6 that the majority of pupils make the progress that could be expected of them. There is some effective teaching and learning but senior leaders and subject managers have not recognised or shared this with all the staff, until recently, and improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

The school provides a caring environment and the very large majority of parents hold positive views about the school and especially value its caring ethos. As expressed by one parent, 'The school is very approachable and caring. The teachers always have time to see you and listen to you.' Pupils report that all the teachers are friendly and helpful. Pupils generally behave well, treating each other with consideration. They like coming to school and attendance is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy the broad and lively curriculum that has a good impact on their range of experiences. Very good sporting activities and food education contribute significantly to their healthy outlook. They enjoy the many ways in which they are able to lead activities and organise their classes. These experiences combined with fund raising adequately prepare them for their future economic well being. Their contribution to the wider community is good, showing their strong moral and social development.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and the governors provide the necessary challenge. The headteacher is managing the support staff well and with the help of the local authority developing the leadership skills of senior managers. Senior leaders have still to develop fully their roles and responsibilities and not all subject leaders are involved closely in monitoring and evaluating their subjects. This means that inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning between classes have not been resolved. However, more regular analysis of pupils' progress helps staff spot those pupils who are falling behind. Initiatives to raise

standards and revise the school's monitoring procedures are starting to work and this demonstrates the school's capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 4

Overall, children in the Foundation Stage make inadequate progress in two areas of their learning and development; communication, language and literacy and problem solving, reasoning and number. Provision for the personal social and emotional development is good and in this area children make good progress. There is insufficient provision for children to develop their emerging writing skills and their reading skills that is accurately matched to their interests and stage of development. Learning about numbers and counting, and understanding of numbers is not sufficiently promoted through practical activities that build on children's interest or specifically planned as a consequence of adults' observations of learning. The leader of the EYFS has taken action to ensure regular opportunity to observe children's learning and some potentially useful information is being collected. However, this information is not evaluated accurately enough against the small steps in learning that lead to the early learning goals for children. The planning of good quality activities both indoors and outdoors to support learners is weak and does not identify for the adults what outcomes are being encouraged. The leader has recognised that for many children over-direction in learning to read and write and working with numbers is counter-productive. However, there is insufficient modelling of good learning by the adults and expectations are generally too low. Instead, there is an over-emphasis on supervising and servicing activities rather than teaching.

Children learn to work well together and share their enjoyment of learning happily with each other. The children are well cared for and parents recognise the special efforts the EYFS team takes to involve them in a productive partnership. The team has appropriate ambitions for the integrated Foundation Stage unit which is soon to be opened. However these are not securely based on rigorous self evaluation and it is unclear how the unit will contribute to improvements in children's achievements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the provision and the outcomes for children in the EYFS.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by using assessment information more effectively to plan lessons that provide pupils with sufficient challenge.
- Monitor teaching and learning more thoroughly to ensure they are of a consistently high quality across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Most children start the nursery with skills that meet expectations with the exception of social and language skills that are below those expected of their age. Children make unsatisfactory progress in the EYFS, so that too many are below expectations in communication, language and literacy and problem solving, reasoning and number when they enter Year 1. Some good provision for their personal development and well being ensures they are meeting expectations in this area of their learning.

In Years 1 to 4 pupils' progress is inconsistent because the curriculum has not been adjusted sufficiently to take account of pupils' prior attainment. There is significant underachievement

in some year groups, where many pupils should be doing better. Pupils with learning difficulties are the only group who make consistently satisfactory progress. Overall standards in the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 have been below-average in recent years. The unvalidated 2008 results show a similar picture of below average attainment. In reading and mathematics, the results indicate that most pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points in Year 1, but they are not reaching their capability in writing.

Pupils in Years 3 and 4, particularly the average and more able pupils are working below their capabilities. Too many of these pupils have failed to meet their targets by Year 4. By the end of Year 6 most pupils catch up and standards overall are close to average. Standards in national tests for Year 6 are average, although in 2007 very few pupils reached the higher levels. The unvalidated 2008 results show that achievement was satisfactory. The targets for pupils were raised significantly and, with a combination of good teaching and 'booster groups', were met. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was in line with the previous year's national average. The school is better at identifying underachievement and a range of intervention strategies is being used successfully to help groups of pupils achieve what they are capable of.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. Their behaviour is good and they work well together. They feel safe in school and do not regard bullying as a serious issue. They are sensitive to each other's needs, both in the classroom and when playing outside. They benefit from regular personal, social and health education sessions, school assemblies, visits and visitors to school. This provision encourages a good awareness of different religions and cultures and promotes a genuine respect for others. Pupils are keen to show off improvements to the environment such as the stimulating play areas. They are also very enthusiastic about being a rights respecting school. The school council is very active and pupils feel they are listened to. For example, the school council decided how funding would be spent on new play equipment. Pupils are also physically active and are aware of the need to eat healthy food. Many walk to school and they all take the opportunities to participate in physical education, swimming and sport. There is a strong sense of community in the school and pupils have raised money successfully for a range of charities. Pupils learn to contribute to the school and wider community, for example by acting as playground leaders, serving on the school council and taking responsibility for the school garden. They are encouraged to recycle and care for their community and have achieved the Healthy Schools Gold Award. Pupils also raise money for the school's partner school in India. The development of pupils' economic well-being is satisfactory. Economic awareness is promoted when for example, pupils run the school snack shop.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching and learning are inadequate. Important weaknesses in the way teachers' manage the learning in lessons lead to uneven progress in writing and mathematics for too many pupils. There is insufficient attention given to the knowledge that the school is building up on pupils' prior attainment and expectations in many lessons are too variable. The match of the work to the learners needs is not good enough. Often the work lacks appropriate challenge for the pupils and some become restless and begin to lose interest in the learning. In subjects such as

history and geography there is an over-reliance on worksheets and learning is superficial. Good use is made of the support staff to teach pupils in small groups. This is effective and many of these pupils make good progress in these lessons. In some lessons observed there was not enough variety in the ways teachers assessed how well pupils were learning during the lesson. A few teachers recognise that they do not have sufficient skills or knowledge to teach all strands of literacy or information and communication technology effectively and this limits what pupils can achieve. The marking of pupils' work does not always reinforce for pupils what is secure and what they need to do to improve. Good learning was seen where teachers engaged the pupils quickly through a clear statement of what was to be learnt and when a variety of strategies, such as drama, were used to maintain a good pace.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides well for pupils' personal development and for ensuring they can make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community. Cooperation and collaboration are encouraged and the good range of visits and visitors gives pupils an understanding of the wider world. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and enquiry skills particularly in creative subjects and science. The school acknowledges the lack of computers in the classrooms is hindering pupils' learning. The wider application of literacy skills is not sufficiently planned for in all year groups to ensure adequate continuity in pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides a caring environment for its pupils. There is effective support for those with moderate learning difficulties and this helps these pupils to make often better progress than others. Bilingual learners are well supported and integrated into the life of the school. Pupils are appreciative of the fair and clear way in which the school encourages good behaviour, for example through the 'golden time' reward system. The pupils say they have noticed a recent improvement in behaviour and attribute this to adopting the rights respecting school agenda.

Record keeping, including maintaining up to date policies and guidance, is not as efficient as it should be although arrangements for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory. The school is effective at involving parents and carers and has developed positive links with outside agencies to ensure appropriate support for its pupils. Target setting to help guide pupils' efforts is in its early stages. Some older pupils are beginning to know what they need to do to improve their work but this is not the case throughout the school. The quality of marking varies widely between classes. Much gives insufficient guidance to pupils on how they can do better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has used the time prior to taking up full responsibility for running the school to gain a good understanding of the relative strengths and areas for improvement. The school improvement plan sets out the strategic direction of the school and work has started on establishing an agreed set of values that will steer its implementation. Effective action has been taken to help groups of pupils to catch up, for example through the provision of intensive

support for groups who are underperforming. However, the existing strategic management committee comprising key staff with leadership and management responsibilities has not yet developed into a driving force for improving teaching and raising expectations. Governors, many of whom are new to the role, are very involved in the life of the school. They have sufficient systems in place to help challenge the school but have in the past relied on the school's senior leaders to tell them how well the school is doing.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	4
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	4
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	4

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	4
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?	3

Leadership and management

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	4
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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
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?	Yes

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

24 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Wildridings Primary School, Bracknell, RG12 7DX

Thank you for making us so welcome on our recent visit. I thank those of you who talked to us about your work and life at the school. You were very polite and helpful. I am writing to let you know what I thought about your school.

Here are the main points.

- Wildridings is a friendly place, you enjoy coming to school and your behaviour is good.
- You enjoy the 'Wednesday activity afternoon' and the practical subjects like art and science. You also like the chance to work in groups, which helps you to feel good about yourselves.
- You play your part in helping each other at school, for example through the school council and taking care of each other at lunchtimes and play times.
- Your headteacher and staff care for you well and get help for you if you have a problem.

Because of the need to ensure that you all make the expected rate of progress in all classes I have given the school what is called a 'Notice to Improve', and I have asked the headteacher and other school leaders to do three things to make it better.

- Improve the way adults help the youngest children learn and develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Help teachers to make better use of information on your progress so work is set at the right level.
- To look carefully at how well you are learning whenever they drop in to visit your lessons and make sure some of the good things the school is doing happen in all classes.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Palk

Her Majesty's Inspector