

Wingate Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114148
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	311503
Inspection dates	12–13 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Oglesby

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Taylor
Headteacher	Mr Grenville Long
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2004
School address	Moor Lane Wingate County Durham TS28 5BA
Telephone number	01429 838313
Fax number	0

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school in a former coal mining village. It draws pupils from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds; nearly all are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. A very small number are learning English as a second language. The proportion known to be entitled to free school meals is higher than average. The school has gained two School Achievement Awards, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People accreditation and the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wingate Junior is a good school with some outstanding features. The school's strengths are recognised by parents, who hold the school in high regard. Typical of many comments is, 'An excellent school in all areas, my daughter has flourished here. I would not hesitate to recommend the school to anyone.' The school takes exceptional care of all its pupils, and parents appreciate the high quality support, both for academic and personal matters. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe and valued. Pupils are considerate and polite to each other and to adults. Their behaviour is excellent. In lessons they concentrate and work hard; this is one reason for their good progress. Pupils leave this school as mature and confident young people, well prepared for the future.

Pupils achieve well. They join the school with a wide range of skills, but overall their attainment is broadly average for their age. They reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Progress is good throughout the school but particularly rapid in Year 6. This is because the school analyses each pupil's strengths and needs and provides sharply focused teaching and support groups to maximise achievement. The results of this were evident in the 2007 tests, when the rate of progress in English and science put the school within the top 20% of similar schools nationally. Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are doing well. More able pupils are successfully challenged so that they achieve well. Last year, for example, two thirds of the pupils in Year 6 achieved beyond the level expected for their age.

The quality of teaching is good, and sometimes outstanding. Lessons are enjoyable, well planned and presented with clarity and humour. Pupils appreciate what their teachers do and are keen to get involved and succeed. Excellent relationships and a calm, supportive ethos encourage pupils to try new work and work independently. This helps them to make progress. Lessons provide activities at the right level for different abilities, but sometimes too much time is spent at the beginning of lessons explaining work to the whole class even though some pupils understand and are ready to move on and start work.

The school's successes stem from the excellent leadership and high expectations of the headteacher. He has created an attractive and stimulating place to grow and learn. He is ably supported by a talented leadership team, committed staff and knowledgeable governors. They work in close partnership to make sure every pupil is happy and making good progress both in academic work and in their personal qualities. Not content to rest on its laurels, however, the school is constantly seeking ways to do better. It is determined to sustain the high standards gained in 2007. This is evident in the rigour of its monitoring. There is, for example, a lively curriculum with plenty of enrichment to motivate and inspire pupils. Despite this, the curriculum is under constant review to see where learning can be even better. This determination to provide the best possible education for its pupils and their parents indicates a good capacity to improve still further. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the pace of learning in the first part of some lessons, by making sure all pupils are actively involved and challenged.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and standards are above average. Results in the 2007 national tests were the best in the school's history, showing very good progress. They were above the national average in mathematics and science and well above in English. Standards dipped in the two previous years; the success in 2007 was the result of the school's determined efforts to make sure all pupils made as much progress as they could. Pupils in the current Year 6 continue to make good progress because teaching and support are good and they are keen to learn. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are also achieving well, as are the small number learning English as a second language. Boys and girls are now performing equally well because the school has successfully introduced changes to the curriculum and teaching styles to improve boys' motivation and raise standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy coming and get involved in all that it offers. The rate of attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now similar to that seen in most schools. Behaviour is exemplary. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are excellent; mutual respect is evident everywhere. Pupils like their teachers and work very hard to please them; this is one reason for their good achievement. Pupils say they feel very safe and well looked after. They say there is no bullying and that any minor incidents are soon solved. Trained playground 'buddies' carry out their duties very well.

Pupils have a good understanding of what is needed to stay safe and healthy. They can talk about what they have learned in school and take full advantage of the healthy meals and snack service. All pupils enjoy being asked to use initiative and they carry out tasks responsibly. For example, they have helped to design local play facilities and successfully raise funds for many good causes. The wide range of experiences they enjoy, together with a relevant programme for personal and social education, helps them to deal sensitively with others and understand different points of view.

Pupils leave this school as self-assured, thoughtful young people. They have good standards in the basic skills and in information and communication technology (ICT). Their good academic skills, positive attitudes to learning and very good social skills prepare them well for their next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. A strength is the way that all teachers work together very effectively to help pupils to succeed. Lessons are planned and organised in similar ways and teachers share high expectations. Consequently, pupils know where they are up to in their learning, become confident learners and make good progress. Teachers explain new ideas clearly and provide activities which motivate learners. They encourage pupils to think for themselves and work independently. Pupils say that they like these challenges and that these lessons help them to improve. For example, in an excellent English lesson in Year 5/6, pupils

enjoyed preparing a written argument to persuade the rest of their class as to who was the guilty party in a traditional story. The impressive results were convincing, logical and very well presented.

Teachers make sure that all pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to reach the next level. Whilst independent and group activities are usually well matched to the abilities of different pupils, there are occasions when the pace of the beginning of the lesson is too slow and there is a lack of challenge for more able pupils. As some older pupils put it, 'the teachers are great and really want you to learn, but sometimes they see just a few puzzled faces and so they go over everything again.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum offers a range of interesting and exciting experiences. A successful priority in the last two years has been to refine the provision for English and mathematics. This has helped to raise standards. Leaders constantly evaluate where pupils are learning well and where improvements need to be made. In this, the school is keen to take advice and try new ideas, and these are adopted only after a thorough analysis of how well they meet pupils' needs.

Computers are used effectively to support pupils' learning. For example, pupils can study at home, using a program which links to their current work in school. This is one of several ways that parents are encouraged to get involved in their child's learning.

The curriculum is enriched through visits, visitors and a variety of clubs and events. These are well attended and both pupils and parents appreciate what is offered. There is good provision for health education and plenty of opportunities for sport and physical exercise. This has been recognised by a recent national award.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's excellent care, guidance and support for pupils are important factors in their good achievement and outstanding personal development. The school values all its pupils and is a welcoming and stimulating place to learn. Parents are happy that their children are extremely well looked after and so feel secure and confident at school. Typical of many comments was, 'a great staff, nothing is too much trouble.' Procedures to keep pupils safe are in place, known by all staff and meet national guidelines. Vulnerable pupils are nurtured very well and the school has very strong links with outside agencies to further provide for their needs.

Academic guidance has improved markedly since the last inspection. The progress of each pupil is tracked carefully and shared amongst staff. Teachers ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of what they have to do to improve. New systems for target setting are challenging pupils of all abilities to achieve as well as they can.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good at all levels. Excellent leadership from the headteacher is at the heart of everything the school provides. He is a strong and caring leader who inspires confidence in staff, pupils and parents. He is ably supported by governors, senior leaders and

other staff. This leads to high levels of care, mutual respect and teamwork. This is an inclusive school and pupils agree that 'every child really does matter here.' There are strong links with parents who are overwhelmingly supportive.

Staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and work extremely well together to bring about the best for all their pupils. Governors are very well informed and involved in all aspects of the school's work and development. They support the school very well but are prepared to hold it to account when necessary.

The school sets challenging targets and was particularly successful in meeting these in 2007. The systems for monitoring pupils' progress in all classes are good. In the older classes the school has been quick to act when progress slows. This is one reason for the big rise in the results in the most recent tests. In the younger classes, this intervention has not been as prompt or effective. The school recognises this and has good plans to extend its procedures. Senior leaders monitor teaching extremely thoroughly and very regularly. However, their observations do not always focus sufficiently on how well pupils are learning in lessons.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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?	1

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	1
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	1
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

14 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wingate Junior School, Durham, DH28 5AB

As you know, we inspected your school recently for two days. I am writing to thank you for being so helpful, welcoming and polite. We especially enjoyed listening to your opinions and watching you work so hard in lessons. We thought that everyone, adults, children, visitors and parents, seemed to enjoy working there. You said you were proud of your school; we think you should be. It's a good school and is always working to be even better.

Everyone seems to get along exceptionally well; some of you told me that this is a great school to make friends: I'm sure they are right. I think you leave Year 6 as exceptionally sensible young people, able to get along with others and respect other people's feelings. We also admired the way that everyone looks after you and makes sure you are safe and happy. You and your parents told us there is always someone to listen and sort out problems quickly.

The teaching is good. You have an interesting curriculum and you really want to listen and learn. No wonder you are making good progress.

We only left one suggestion for a way the school might improve. We thought that your lessons help you to succeed; the work is not too hard and not too easy. However, sometimes in the listening parts of lessons, usually the first part, we thought that some of you were ready to move on a bit faster and be allowed to get on with your work sooner.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Oglesby

Lead inspector