

Wildground Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115883
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312089
Inspection dates	5–6 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Bernice Magson

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	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Jonathan Forster
Headteacher	Mr John Wright
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2004
School address	Armitage Avenue Dibden Purlieu Southampton SO45 4LG
Telephone number	02380 842042
Fax number	02380 877976

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized junior school has a larger than average number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Pupil numbers are declining. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at normal times is high. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Above average numbers of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. In the last three years, significant changes have taken place in staffing and in the governing body. The school shares its site with an infant school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school, which provides pupils with a satisfactory quality of education. A team of dedicated staff are committed to raising standards, which are now broadly average overall. They are a little above in science and a little below in English. There is a weakness in writing standards over time. Inspection evidence supports teacher assessments that the current Year 6 will achieve their predicted targets, including more pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics.

Pupils enjoy school, have positive attitudes to learning and are proud of their achievements. This is because relationships are strong and pupils know what is expected of them. Behaviour is good. Pupils have good skills of cooperation and teamwork. They have a good understanding of right and wrong, and a strong appreciation of the needs of others. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through the school council, pupils are eager to bring about improvement. They have purchased equipment for lunchtimes, for example. Their understanding of citizenship is increasing through charity collections and involvement in local community events. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Year 6 pupils organise 'the Pit Stop', a healthy tuck shop, which operates at breaktimes. Workplace and other basic skills, important to pupils' future economic well-being, develop satisfactorily.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory over time, which mirrors pupils' achievements. The school's own monitoring and work in pupils' books show that learning tasks are not always matched sufficiently to pupils' needs. However, during the inspection, teaching was good and pupils were challenged well. This was because teachers planned effectively. Additional strategies are now in place to support less able pupils in English and mathematics although, pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn independently in some lessons. Teachers' marking is good and improvement targets are used successfully to guide and support pupils. Specialist teaching is effective in developing pupils' knowledge and skills in music. A good range of visits and visitors enhance a satisfactory curriculum by allowing pupils to learn in more depth. Nevertheless, pupils are not given enough opportunities to work creatively. The school has identified a weakness in writing, which they are seeking to address, including a focus on spelling and handwriting. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory and they achieve as well as all other pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has maintained a disciplined and caring environment, where pupils' efforts and achievement are celebrated and rewarded. Significant changes in senior managers and several vacancies in the governing body have restricted the school's effectiveness in self-evaluation. Improvement planning, monitoring and evaluation of outcomes are satisfactory. Early indications are that strategies to improve teaching and learning and the curriculum are beginning to take effect and standards are improving. Leaders at all levels recognise that planning for the longer term is needed, so that a rigorous approach to raising standards is sustained. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and pupils' achievements in writing.
- Devise a curriculum which provides more opportunities for pupils to work on imaginative and creative experiences, and include a clear focus on independent learning.
- Develop a more focused improvement plan for the longer term to increase the roles of leaders at all levels in strategic planning and self-evaluation.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds achieve satisfactorily. Several factors have an adverse impact on their attainment. Above average numbers of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities and significant numbers of pupils join or leave the school at times other than the normal admission. Nevertheless, there is recent improvement in pupils' performance in national tests. Although standards are below average in most years, results in 2007 are broadly average. Teachers are now challenging pupils more effectively. Standards in science have improved significantly because pupils enjoy investigative activities and work hard. Despite good strategies to improve pupils' rates of progress in English, a number of pupils do not attain national expectations. Writing is the weaker aspect in English. Assessment data shows that pupils are on course to achieve their predicted targets set for 2008.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. They say that they feel safe and secure, appreciating that adults will listen to their concerns and respond fairly. Pupils negotiate their class rules annually for a behaviour charter. They say that bullying is rare. They are confident that adults will deal speedily with any instances of inappropriate behaviour. Pupils have a good pride in their achievements and are eager to share their work with visitors. They make good links with the local community and the residents of a care home reciprocate the school's good work by helping to develop the curriculum. Pupils were pleased to receive a colourful patchwork collage worked by two residents, which depicts scenes from World War II. Pupils' understanding of cultural differences and wider world issues is developing well. To help protect the environment recycling takes place. Some pupils have been involved in tree planting to improve their environment and learn about their carbon footprint.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There are good signs that the school's focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning is having a positive effect. Teachers have a greater awareness of the need to match work closely to pupils' different abilities and needs. During the inspection, classrooms were purposeful environments for learning and positive relationships between pupils and with adults engendered a willingness and enthusiasm to learn. However, pupils' books and the school's own monitoring show that these changes are recently in place. Teacher expectations have been too low and learning tasks had only a limited challenge. Better lessons now take place at a brisk pace and teachers use a good variety of methods to motivate pupils. Interactive whiteboards and computers are enhancing learning opportunities in a different media. In some less successful lessons, the pace of learning is slower and there are too few opportunities for individuals to work at length. Teachers' marking is of a good quality enabling pupils to know how to improve. Improvement targets in literacy and numeracy are appropriately set and aid learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

A satisfactory curriculum meets the needs and interests of pupils. It has a strong focus on developing basic skills and understanding in literacy and numeracy. Provision is good in information and communication technology and, as a result, standards have improved. A number of imaginative and creative experiences are planned to enable learning in a greater depth, although the school has recognised that these need to increase. Already, there are some good links across subjects. The school uses a substantial number of visitors and visits to enhance pupils' learning. A residential visit for Year 6 includes good opportunities to improve social skills. Out-of-school clubs are popular with pupils, although there is a limited range. An enthusiastic group of boys and girls enjoy football activities each morning with members of Southampton football club, for example. Personal, social and health education is well planned and includes good attention to drugs and sex education. Outside agencies enhance this provision. There is satisfactory provision for pupils identified with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and supported. There is a cohesive approach and continuity to the care given throughout the school. One parent confirmed the views of others that they are and;quot;extremely impressed with the care and attitudes in this school.and;quot; Child protection procedures and safety checks are in place. The home/school link officer and special needs coordinator work together well to meet the needs of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupils' academic guidance gives good targets for improvement in English and mathematics. Information on pupils' progress is usefully shared with parents each term. Some parents reported that they would like even more information in order to give better support at home. Assessment data is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance, although mostly on literacy and numeracy. Pupils are given information about what they need to do in order to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Under the guidance of the headteacher the school is a happy and friendly place, where every child and adult is a valued member of the school community. Self-evaluation procedures are satisfactory. Over time, strategic planning, monitoring and review have relied heavily on the headteacher and a senior manager. Staff and governors are still developing their leadership and management roles. They have not been robust enough in monitoring and reviewing outcomes. A new senior management team is committed to raising standards. Recent strategies are proving successful, although not yet fully embedded. Currently, planning is too short-term and leaders have identified that there is a need to plan strategically for the longer-term so that initiatives to raise standards are sustained. Financial procedures are good and monies are targeted prudently to perceived needs.

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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?	3
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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 disabilities make progress	3

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	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 the learners' needs?	3
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?	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 December 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Wildground Junior School, Southampton, SO45 4LG

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and hearing about all the exciting things, which you do each day. We were impressed with the performances of Year 4 at the music concert. We think that your school is giving you a satisfactory education that is improving at a good rate.

We liked these things about your school:

- you enjoy science and are achieving well
- you share ideas and opinions and work together well in lessons
- your computer suite is providing you with good opportunities to learn ICT skills
- the school council are eager and influence the work of the school
- adults care and support you well.

We think you could do even better with your writing and have asked the teachers to help you improve in these subjects. We think that teachers should provide a wider range of practical activities and special weeks, which makes you think even harder and learn in greater depth. We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to make some longer-term plans for the future of your school. Your headteacher knows that it is important to make sure that all the new ideas continue to develop because in that way it will make your school even better.

We hope that you continue to enjoy your time at Wildground Junior School.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours truly

Bernice Magson

Lead inspector