

The White's Wood Lane Community Junior School, Gainsborough

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120489
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313636
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Krishan Sharma

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 (total)	145
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Susan Wilson
Headteacher	Mrs Sharron Close
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2004
School address	Whites Wood Lane Gainsborough Lincolnshire DN21 1TJ
Telephone number	01427 613097
Fax number	01427 677898

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2008
Inspection number	313636

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Of the very few from minority ethnic groups, none has a first language which is not English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average, as are those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The area that the school serves reflects a considerable socio-economic disadvantage. The school provides a breakfast club, which is well-attended. Most pupils enter Year 3 with broadly average standards in the basic skills in English and mathematics.

The school has gained the National Healthy Schools, the Investors in People and the Charter Standard School awards. It holds the Silver Eco and Clear Air awards for promoting environmental awareness.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The White's Wood Lane Junior is a satisfactory but rapidly improving school. The best ever end-of-Year 6 national test results in 2008 indicate that it now has high expectations for its pupils. Parents are well satisfied with what the school offers to their children. As one parent points out, 'over the last few years there have been many improvements, especially in behaviour management and after-school activities'. The effective partnerships that the school has formed with others in the locality and with the local authority are helping it to improve pupils' learning and their personal development.

The headteacher and staff have rightly concentrated on raising standards in the basic skills. As a result, the decline of recent years has been arrested and standards are rising, as shown in the Year 6 test results in 2007 and 2008. Standards achieved by the current Year 6 pupils are on target to remain close to the national average by the end of the year. More pupils are now making good progress as they move through the school. However, the lack of consistently good progress across the school adds up to broadly satisfactory achievement overall. This lack of evenness in progress mirrors the variation in the quality of teaching and learning across the school, which ranges from satisfactory to good, but is satisfactory overall. The more effective and engaging teaching accelerates the rate of progress in Years 5 and 6, thereby making a significant contribution to improving standards. Pupils with additional needs make good progress in basic skills due to the clear identification of their needs and the effective guidance given to them.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, which is evident in their good attendance and attitudes to learning in lessons. The good pastoral care is helping pupils to gain confidence and not to be afraid of making mistakes. As a result, pupils show good social skills that prepare them well for the world of work. The development of other skills, such as the ability to give reasons for their thinking, remains satisfactory. Pupils' good personal development is reflected in the regard they show for their own and others' safety. Their care for others is also demonstrated in the willing contribution they make to local community activities and good causes. Because of the emphasis placed on promoting good health in the curriculum, most pupils eat sensibly and participate enthusiastically in physical activities both in and after school. The curriculum succeeds in helping pupils acquire basic skills. However, not enough has been done to improve links between subjects and skills across the subjects to add further interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning. Academic guidance given through marking is good, as it makes it clear how well pupils are learning and how they could improve their work.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Because of the headteacher's determination, the school has secured considerable improvement since the last inspection. However, more remains to be done in order to improve the rate of progress pupils make across the school. The school's checking systems are strong in collating and using data to track pupils' progress. They are insufficiently rigorous in evaluating the impact of teaching on learning in lessons or the quality of the work in pupils' books. The subject leaders are keen to support the school's self-evaluation but have insufficient guidance, sharp monitoring skills or opportunities to practise them. Given the limitations in self-evaluation, the school's capacity to improve further is currently satisfactory. However, some building blocks are already in place. The chair of governors is committed to moving the school forward and is working hard to encourage the rest of the governing body to engage with the school more effectively.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress across the school.
- Increase rigour in monitoring and evaluation, particularly when evaluating the impact of teaching on learning in lessons or the quality of pupils' written work.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders so that they can play a more influential part in whole-school self-evaluation.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The unconfirmed 2008 national test results for Year 6 pupils represent a marked upturn in the school's performance. Standards exceeded the provisional national averages in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher level has also risen. These results suggest that that cohort of pupils made good progress. The progress of pupils currently in the school is beginning to accelerate. More pupils are now working at, or close to, the levels expected for their ages, representing broadly satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although their knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity in the wider community is less strong. Pupils find lessons interesting; they behave well and establish good relationships with each other and adults in the school. Pupils know the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. Their movement in and around the school shows that they care about others' and their own safety. They willingly raise funds for good causes in the community. Pupils' literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are gradually improving in order to equip them for the world of work. However, many are less secure in explaining what they have been learning clearly and convincingly.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils work well together in lessons. The teaching assistants provide effective support to those identified as needing additional help. In the more effective lessons, teachers use their good subject knowledge to make their explanations clear and to ask probing questions. In these lessons, pupils are highly challenged and, as a result, they achieve their best. Teachers engage with pupils in extended conversations about how well they are doing and how they could improve their work. In the satisfactory lessons, the purpose of learning is not always clear and the long introductions and explanations leave limited time for pupils to work independently. Consequently, the pace of learning slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school places due importance on the development of English and mathematics skills, the areas of relative weakness for pupils. ICT is used to improve pupils' learning and the presentation of their work across many subjects. However, curriculum planning does not always provide sufficient guidance to teachers on how they should adapt topics to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities and aptitudes. As a result, some pupils are not challenged enough for them to achieve their best. The social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programme promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils enjoy the opportunities this programme offers for drama and role-playing. The teaching of German brings a European dimension to the curriculum. Educational visits, visitors to school and a good range of extracurricular activities enrich pupils' learning and their personal development effectively.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Personal care, guidance and support are good. Arrangements for ensuring health and safety, child protection and risk assessments are in place. Parents feel that the school cares deeply about their children, one of them noting that 'any concerns are dealt with immediately'. The school has clear and successful procedures for promoting good behaviour. As a result, the previously high number of exclusions has been reduced and the school has suitable plans to reduce them further. Academic guidance given to pupils is good overall. Targets set for individual pupils are making sense to them because they give them something to aim for. Pupils with additional academic and behavioural needs are catered for well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, staff and the governors are fully committed to improving pupils' achievement and their personal development. They have identified priorities for future development that provide clear direction for the school's work. Following its recent successes, the school is aiming high and setting challenging targets for itself. However, it has not yet acquired enough rigour in its systems for evaluating either the quality of teaching and learning, or pupils' progress in their written work. Analysis of data is used well to identify pupils who need additional support and hence to deploy teaching assistants. In general, the school knows its strengths and weaknesses. The subject leaders have insufficient opportunities to practise their monitoring skills. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion through its various links with the community. Governance is satisfactory, and governors are in the process of developing their involvement in the work of the school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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?	2
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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	2
The attendance of learners	2
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?	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

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

19 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The White's Wood Lane Community Junior School, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, DN21 1TJ

Thank you for the warm welcome I received when I came to school. I enjoyed being in your classrooms, looking at your work and talking to you about it. There are many good things about your school. Here are some of them.

- You behave well and get on well with each other.
- You enjoy taking part in after-school activities.
- You know a lot about how to keep yourselves healthy.
- Your parents have confidence in the school.
- Your teachers and other adults in the school take good care of you.
- Your headteacher, Mrs Close, has done a lot since she arrived to make your school better.

This is what I have asked the governors and the headteacher to do:

- make sure that lessons in all classrooms are the best they can be so that all of you make as much progress as you can
- improve the way the school checks how good lessons are and how good your work is in your books
- help teachers get better at checking more closely how well you are doing in the areas of work they are leading.

Yours sincerely

Krishan Sharma

Lead inspector