

White Woman Lane Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120914
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313790
Inspection dates	19–20 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Sarah McDermott

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	265
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Judy Leggett
Headteacher	Mrs Ashley Best-White
Date of previous school inspection	23 February 2004
School address	White Woman Lane Sprowston Norwich Norfolk NR6 7JA
Telephone number	01603419203
Fax number	01603424651

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by 3 Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average junior school. It serves a population from a range of social and economic backgrounds. Fewer pupils than average are eligible for free school meals. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is close to the average. There are very few pupils with English as an additional language.

The school changed from a middle school to a junior school in September 2007. Nearly all pupils transfer from the nearby infant school. The school has gained awards for Activemark, Artsmark and Eco-Schools and from Investors in People and National Association of Professional Teaching Assistants.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

White Woman Lane Junior is a satisfactory school with some good features. Standards are broadly average in English and mathematics. Pupils achieve as they should in English, but progress in mathematics was not as good as it should have been last year. Standards in science are above average and achievement is good because of lively 'hands on' activities and stable leadership. The school is aware that many of the more able pupils often do not reach their expected levels. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress. The headteacher was away assisting another school last year. Since her return, she has made an effective start to tackling the areas that need improvement. The new leadership team is enthusiastic and committed to improvement, but its impact on supporting strategic direction and raising standards is not yet sufficiently established. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.

Pupils enjoy school and behave well. Attendance has been consistently high. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good. Parents are particularly pleased with how confident and self assured their children become. Pupils lead healthy and safe lives. They are community minded, enjoy giving their views, and they know their voice is heard. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils get on well with their teachers and marking is mainly good. In some lessons pace is slow and there is not enough challenge for the more able pupils. There is a lack of consistency in the way pupils are told how well they are doing and how to improve their work. The curriculum is good because it is lively and gives pupils a wide range of experiences. Art, sport and music are especially strong. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils are well looked after. This is particularly evident with the large number of younger pupils that has settled in well to the new junior school. Academic tracking is satisfactory. The school has set up effective new systems to assess how pupils are progressing at regular points. However, the drive towards the ultimate aim of achieving challenging targets at the end of Key Stage 2 is not sufficiently even. On occasion, there is still a mismatch of work to the needs of pupils in lessons.

The school has taken effective steps to address the issues from the last inspection. It has good capacity to improve because the headteacher, who has a proven reputation for successfully helping schools to improve, has a committed team with her. Already the school is seeing improvements in progress in the new Year 3 because teaching is good and there is consistent involvement of pupils in their targets. A large number of new pupils have settled in well. All this bodes well for a new and improving junior school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics.
- Ensure all pupils, and in particular the more able, reach the standards they are capable of by matching work better to pupils' needs.
- Ensure there is a consistent method of informing pupils how they can improve their work.
- Develop the senior leadership team so that it takes a greater role in strategic overview and direction.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In 2007, pupils in Year 6 reached broadly average standards in English and mathematics. Standards are consistently high in science. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils

arrive with attainment similar to or just above national expectations. They often do better than expected in science, but a significant number of pupils did not achieve as well as they should in mathematics. The school did not meet the targets set for English and mathematics in 2007. The discrepancy was greatest for the higher attaining pupils. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress.

Current Year 6 pupils are on track to meet their English targets for the end of year tests in 2008. However, the school is aware that their goal for higher levels in mathematics is too ambitious and unlikely to be attained.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The behaviour and attitudes of the pupils are good. Almost all pupils settle quickly in lessons and show interest in what they do. They are aware of the needs of others and willingly fulfil simple responsibilities such as helping in the playground or contributing to the school council. Attendance is above the national average. The pupils arrive punctually and work responsibly and productively throughout the day, laying sound foundations for their future working life. Most pupils follow a healthy lifestyle.

Pupils participate enthusiastically in PE lessons and sports clubs. They conduct themselves safely, adopting suitable caution when necessary and respecting the interests and needs of others. The pupils enjoy the many activities and outings on offer. They are beginning to take more charge of their own learning by understanding what needs to be improved and making sure suggestions by teachers are followed up, but this is not consistent yet. Pupils appreciate a range of cultures and traditions through lively art and music lessons. They readily make good contributions to the wider local and global community. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their positive dispositions and attitudes contribute much to a climate in which they feel safe and enjoy their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers work hard and show determination to improve standards and achievement. They have good relationships with the pupils and lessons are calm and orderly. There are high expectations of behaviour and involvement in all the activities provided. Pupils enjoy their learning and many speak enthusiastically about their lessons. The best teaching really stimulates pupils. For example a Year 6 class performed to a very high standard when doing 'news reports' on the death of Charles Dickens. Teaching and learning in the new Year 3 classes are good. There is some less stimulating teaching, and in these lessons, progress is not rapid enough for all pupils to fulfill their potential. Day-to-day assessment procedures and target setting are not consistent between classes and subjects. In mathematics, for example, teachers follow the same methods to show pupils what they can do to improve, whereas in English there is a wide range of different versions of targets. This leads to confusion and a lack of challenge for some groups, particularly for the more able pupils. Marking is mainly good and most has developmental comments that indicate how work might be improved.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils are extremely positive about the range of opportunities available to them. Regular lessons, including modern foreign languages, give pupils a good breadth of experiences. Links between subjects are satisfactory. At present the school is making good use of the subject expertise built up when a middle school to develop the curriculum. There is a very good range of well attended after school clubs, with many day and residential visits to enrich the curriculum. Outside specialists enhance provision in music, creative arts, and sport. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support work in other subjects and contributes positively to pupils' learning and enjoyment of school. Well-organised intervention strategies ensure that the needs of those pupils with learning difficulties are met well. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development well and successfully supports healthy living and staying safe. The appropriate focus on basic skills and working cooperatively helps prepare pupils for their future lives and economic well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The staff provide good support for pupils through close day-to-day supervision. They ensure pupils enjoy school and nobody is left out of activities. Since becoming a junior school they have successfully inducted and enthused the large number of new pupils. An effective programme of personal, social and health education promotes pupils' understanding of health, safety and relationships. Pupils feel well looked after and know where to turn for help when needed. Parents are very impressed with how the school cares for their children. As one parent wrote, 'Through the caring attitude the children develop confidence which serves them well as they move on to High School.' The school makes detailed risk assessments, and first aid and other training are up to date. Safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils have group and individual targets for English and mathematics, but different formats used in different subjects hinders better learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The strong leadership of the headteacher sets clear direction and focus for the school. She has returned to lead the school with vigour and determination. The newly appointed members of the senior leadership team are enthusiastic and committed to taking the school forward. However, they have not yet all graduated to having a clear strategic view of where the school should be going. Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team and benefit from clear lines of management. The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. The organisation of the use of accommodation has improved since the last inspection.

Subject leaders know the strengths and areas for development through regular and effective monitoring of their subjects. The school is clear about what needs to be done and already objectives in the new School Improvement and Development Plan, such as new tracking procedures, have been put in place. Targets are challenging and based on what teachers know pupils should be able to achieve. However, the new subject leaders are not yet all using these effectively to raise standards. Governors are supportive and give a satisfactory steer to the school.

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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	2

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	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 the learners' needs?	3
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?	3

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

21 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of White Woman Lane Junior School, Sprowston, NR6 7JA

Thank you very much for contributing to the inspection by talking to us and showing us what you can do.

We think you behave well and your attendance is good. We know you get on well with your teachers and this helps you to learn. In lessons, we believe your teachers are good at making learning fun. Your parents are pleased that you go to White Woman Lane Junior School because they believe you are well looked after. We agree. You participate actively in the exciting after school clubs and you know about healthy eating. We were impressed with the grown up way you take on jobs such as school council representatives, play organisers and contributing to the Eco-council. Of particular note was the film you made to give a clear message that you will not put up with bullying. Even though half of you are new to the school, you have all settled in very well.

To make the school even better we have asked Mrs Best-White and the governors to do four things. Firstly, to make sure teachers help you to reach better standards in mathematics. Secondly, to check that the work you do is not too hard or not too easy, but just right. Thirdly, to ensure that targets to improve your work are easy to find and understand. Fourthly, to train the new senior teachers to help Mrs Best-White lead the school and make it even better.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. I am sure all your teachers will continue to work to make your school a special place for you. You can do your bit by continuing to be positive, helpful and make the most of your time at White Woman Lane Junior School.

Mrs McDermott

Lead inspector