

# Needwood CofE VA Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 124377         |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Staffordshire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 314909         |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 12 March 2008  |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Gerald Griffin |

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

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|---|--|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Voluntary aided  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |  |
| School                                    | 68   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                       |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | R Waite  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Caroline Jackson   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 16 June 2003   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Yoxall Road<br>Newborough<br>Burton-on-Trent<br>DE13 8SU |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01283 575216   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01283 575216   |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Needwood is a small Church of England primary school. There are three mixed-age classes. A very small proportion of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. An acting headteacher has been leading the school since January 2008.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Needwood is a good school. Parents overwhelmingly support the school and believe it provides a good quality of education. One typically writes, 'My daughter is making good progress and always enjoys going to school. Its small size creates a very friendly and happy environment in which to learn.' Parents are right to be pleased as pupils achieve well and attain standards that are above average. Pupils make consistently good progress in English, mathematics and science. Whilst children make good progress overall in the Reception class, there are too few opportunities to develop their independence through use of the outside play area.

Pupils' personal development is good and thrives in the school's happy Christian atmosphere. Pupils are confident, polite and considerate to adults and each other and their behaviour is good. Pupils have positive attitudes and they enjoy all aspects of school and feel very safe. Their outstanding attendance is testimony to this.

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are lively and interesting and pupils are keen to learn. Teachers plan challenging work that matches well the differing needs of pupils in mixed age classes. As a result, pupils work hard and make good progress. The Christian theme of assemblies and regular church services provides good support for pupils' spiritual development. The good curriculum supports most aspects of pupils' personal development well. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to take part in physical education indoors during inclement weather.

Pupils are well looked after and given good support. The small size of the school enables adults to have a very detailed understanding of the needs of all pupils. They use this knowledge well to provide a high level of personal care for all. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided with sensitive support, which enables them to make good progress. Academic guidance for pupils is satisfactory. Marking is undertaken regularly but it does not consistently provide pupils with clear instructions on how they can improve their work.

Good leadership and management underpin the work of the school. The acting headteacher provides a clear lead for the school. Her determination to improve the quality of education is shared by the staff and their morale is high. The school has a good record of improvement and this shows the school is well placed to get even better.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress overall in the Reception class and attain standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their age on entry to Year 1. The good use of number games is promoting children's mathematical development particularly well. Teaching and learning are good and result in children making generally good progress across all the areas of their learning. Relationships in the stimulating classroom environment are happy and positive. However, teachers do not consistently provide children with the choice to play and work outdoors. This restricts opportunities for children to develop their independence, a relative weakness in their overall good personal, social and emotional development. The curriculum provides an appropriate balance of adult-led activities and those which children choose themselves. However, children's physical development is restricted because the indoor area is small and the outdoor area is not covered, which limits its use in wet weather. The provision is well led and managed and there is good assessment of the children's progress and attainments. Parents are happy with the

well-structured measures that help children settle into school and promote their care and welfare.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Develop the quality of marking to give pupils clear guidance on how they can improve their work.
- Improve the independence of children in the Foundation Stage by providing them with more opportunities to choose activities, particularly using outdoor play equipment.
- Explore ways in which the timetable can be arranged to allow for more indoor physical education lessons during poor weather.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children's skills and experiences on entry to Reception are similar to those expected for their age. However, with such small numbers, it varies considerably from year-to-year. Pupils' achievement is good overall, including for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Standards are above average in Year 6 but vary from year to year because numbers are small. The achievement of boys has improved, and boys and girls now make similar progress. This is because the school has improved learning resources, such as educational games and learning opportunities that appeal especially to boys. Whilst standards for girls in Year 3 are above those of the boys, the school is ensuring that the higher proportion of boys with learning difficulties in this year group make good progress.

Pupils make good progress in English; progress in reading is also good and improving. Progress in mathematics has improved because the school provides more opportunities for pupils to use their knowledge of numbers to solve mathematical problems. Specialist teaching and good opportunities for practical work lead to above average standards in science. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average because there are good opportunities to use the readily accessible computers.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's Christian atmosphere is helping pupils develop a high level of respect for other people, the environment and property. It provides them with a strong moral code that underpins their good behaviour. Pupils readily help each other and work well in teams, although some younger pupils find it difficult to listen to the views of others on occasions. A good knowledge of world religions deepens their respect for the values and beliefs of people from backgrounds different to their own.

The extremely rare incidences of bullying are quickly and effectively resolved. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, for example on the internet. They have a good understanding of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and most do their best to eat a balanced diet and take plenty of exercise. They enjoy coming to school and describe lessons, after school clubs, educational visits, and meeting their friends as 'great fun.' Pupils are keen to take responsibility as 'play leaders' and 'peer buddies.' The pupils' toilets and the apparatus available for play at breaks have improved as a result of recommendations from the school council. Pupils enthusiastically join in village events such as May Day celebrations and support the wider community through

charity collections. Above average standards and their positive attitudes are preparing pupils well for secondary school and future employment.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Relationships in lessons are very positive and pupils work hard. Teachers make good use of computers and other technology to engage pupils and make work interesting. Work is planned well and teachers ensure that it matches the needs of the different ages and abilities in each class. Teachers are careful to ensure that lessons actively involve pupils in their learning and this helps to accelerate their progress. Teachers make good use of feedback from pupils' answers to plan the next stage of the lesson to ensure learning proceeds at a lively pace. Occasionally, teachers allow lessons to become too noisy; this distracts pupils from their work, and progress slows. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with learning difficulties.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Science lessons and time devoted to personal and social education provide pupils with a good understanding of why they need to maintain a healthy lifestyle. There are many opportunities for pupils to meet and work with their peers from other schools to broaden their learning experiences. Regular educational visits, such as field trips to Blithfield Reservoir, add interest and relevance to classroom work and extend pupils' horizons. The school hall is used as a classroom and the school has not explored sufficiently how the timetable can be amended to allow for more indoor physical education lessons during inclement weather. Many popular and well-attended clubs such as football and computing widen pupils' sporting and cultural interests.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are well looked-after at school and pastoral care is outstanding. Pupils can readily approach an adult at school with a problem, knowing their concerns will be sympathetically and effectively resolved. The school consults regularly with outside agencies to ensure pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have effective individual learning programmes. Child protection and health and safety arrangements are robust and regularly updated. The school works most effectively with parents and pupils to secure very high levels of attendance.

Teachers' marking is supportive and highlights mistakes. Some marking also shows pupils how to make their work better but this is not a consistent picture and, overall, pupils are not clear enough about what precise steps they need to take to improve their work so that they can reach their targets.

## **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school regularly undertakes robust monitoring and evaluation of its work, which provides it with a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development. This has led to effective

improvement plans. For example, to raise interest and standards in reading, the library has been restocked with popular books that are avidly read by both boys and girls. The school regularly checks the progress of pupils and takes effective action when progress slows. The school sets challenging and realistic targets, although these are often not recorded in a format that is easily checked. The acting headteacher receives valuable support from subject leaders in checking standards and improving performance in their areas. The leadership team has provided staff with effective training on how to use assessment information to plan lessons that meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. Staff are used well to keep class sizes small and to provide pupils with more individual attention. This is especially contributing to the good progress in reading.

The governors work very hard on behalf of the school and provide it with valuable support. Their good understanding of data enables them to challenge the school rigorously over its performance.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 2   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 2   |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 2 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?                                  | 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  | 1 |
| 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 | 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?   | 2 |

<sup>1</sup> 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**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2   |
| 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                     | 2   |
| 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

13 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Needwood C of E (C) Primary School, Burton-on-Trent DE13 8SU

We enjoyed our visit to your school. You were very polite and friendly and you made us feel most welcome. You clearly enjoy being in a small school in which you get on with each other and the adults very well. You are rightly proud of the school's happy Christian atmosphere. Needwood is a good school. Here are some of our findings.

- You make good progress in your lessons.
- The good teaching helps you to reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- You feel very safe and secure.
- You behave well and your attendance is outstanding.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- The good curriculum provides many extra activities and visits out of school.
- Adults in the school look after you very well.
- The headteacher and teachers are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

We have asked the school to do three things to help it get even better:

- Provide comments in your books that help you to understand what you need to do to improve.
- Give those of you in the Reception class more opportunities to make better use of the outdoor area in your learning.
- Make sure the hall is available for indoor physical education lessons during poor weather.

You can help the school by continuing to behave well and trying your best in lessons.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin Lead Inspector

13 March 2008



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Lead Inspector