

Wansdyke Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126267
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315463
Inspection dates	30–31 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Chris Nye HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Webber
Headteacher	James Smith
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2003
School address	Downlands Road Devizes SN10 5EF
Telephone number	01380 725234
Fax number	01380 728080

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wansdyke Community Primary School is of average size, and its pupils are of predominantly White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who receive free school meals is below average and the school serves an area of mainly private housing. This is a popular school and applications for places from a wide area regularly exceed those available. Although the number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well above average because the school has a specialist learning centre which caters for pupils with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has achieved a Healthy Schools award and an Activemark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wansdyke is a good and improving school with many strengths, particularly in pupils' personal development and well-being. It is led and managed well, and accurately evaluates its own performance.

Children enter the school with skills and knowledge below expectations but, because of good teaching in the Foundation Stage and throughout the school, they make good progress. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and science. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory and the school recognises that it is not as good as in other subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those in the specialist learning centre, make good progress relative to their low starting points. They are particularly successful in science. Standards throughout the school in other subjects, for example art, are high. Very effective systems are in place to assess and record pupils' progress, but although pupils know what their targets are, the quality of marking varies and this means that they are not always sufficiently clear about what they need to do to improve their work. This applies particularly to the higher attaining pupils in mathematics.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. This particularly applies to their spiritual, moral and social development and is illustrated by their exemplary behaviour and attitudes towards their learning and each other. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school and demonstrate very strongly their understanding of, and commitment to, the inclusive and caring ethos of the school. Effective inclusion is also illustrated by the carefully planned integration of pupils from the specialist learning centre. Parents have a high regard for the school; 'Wansdyke is a wonderful school' is a comment made by one, but reflecting the views of many. A minority of parents feel that they could be better informed about their children's progress. There are very effective systems in place to ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after.

Good leadership and management at all levels are underpinned by a clear sense of direction and a commitment to improvement. All the staff work well as a team and have made good progress in addressing the issues raised in the previous inspection. Strategies to address past underachievement in writing have been particularly successful and demonstrate the school's good capacity to make improvements in the future. The school works well with its community and is well supported by the local authority, particularly in meeting the needs of pupils in the specialist learning centre.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision for the youngest children is good, with some strong features, because it is well led and managed. Children make good progress in all areas of learning, many from low starting points. The children are well taught and cared for and the curriculum is well designed to meet their needs. However, the accommodation is too cramped there is restricted access to the outside play area. Staff are very friendly and approachable and go out of their way to ensure that children are happy and settled. As a result, children very much enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes towards their learning. There are very good links with parents and their views are well reflected in the comment of one: 'My son thoroughly enjoys coming to Wansdyke each day.'

Children are accurately assessed when they start school, and this shows that skills and knowledge are generally below the standards expected for their age. Careful and detailed ongoing assessment of their development enables interesting and exciting teaching to focus well on children's individual needs. As a result, standards are broadly average by the time they transfer to Year 1, although weaker in mathematical development and in communication, language and literacy than in the other areas of learning. Overall, the Foundation Stage provides a good start to children's primary education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and achievement in mathematics throughout the school.
- Ensure that marking consistently provides all pupils with more detailed guidance and challenges higher attaining pupils to make even better progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good overall, with some outstanding aspects. Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards below expected levels, but make good progress and achieve average standards by the time they transfer to Year 1. In Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well overall. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory, but because of the strong emphasis placed on developing literacy skills, progress in reading and writing is outstanding.

In Key Stage 2, continued good teaching means that good progress is maintained. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and science. In mathematics standards are broadly average and higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to achieve their potential. In other subjects, pupils make good progress, particularly in information and communication technology (ICT) and in design and technology. Standards in art and design are particularly high. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those in the specialist learning centre, achieve well relative to often very low starting points. This is because they are very well supported. They make good progress in reading and writing, satisfactory progress in mathematics and outstanding progress in science.

Published data on the most recent national tests indicate that standards were too low at the end of Key Stage 2. However, these are misleading because they include results from a significant group of pupils who, because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities, did not take part in the national tests.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils have extremely positive attitudes and are enthusiastic about their learning. Their behaviour in class and around school and the politeness, confidence and care that they demonstrate do them and the school great credit. They have excellent role models in the adults and are enthusiastically supportive of the sense of fairness and inclusion which is a strong feature of the school. This is illustrated by the way in which pupils proactively involve vulnerable pupils in their play and celebrate their achievements in class with genuine pleasure. Pupils' awareness and appreciation of faiths and cultures different from their own are very good.

Effective systems are in place to ensure that pupils have a good awareness of the importance of keeping fit and eating healthily. This is illustrated by the sensible choices that they make at lunchtime and the popularity of the sporting activities offered to them. Pupils demonstrate a

very good awareness of how to keep themselves safe because of excellent planned activities to promote safe practices, such as a very effective assembly on internet safety. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community and demonstrate very high levels of responsibility. They are developing good skills in literacy, team building and ICT and this means that they are being well prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are well organised, classes are managed very well, and as one pupil put it, 'Teachers make it fun to learn, you get lots done and understand it.' Relationships between staff and pupils are good and pupils are very attentive, responding readily to teachers' instruction and questions. Lessons are well planned, although in some too much time is spent on introducing an activity. Gentle humour and praise are very well used to encourage pupils, especially younger ones, to 'have a go' at new learning. This contributes well to their growing independence and self-confidence. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and they make good progress as a result. Teaching assistants provide effective support to learning, although they are not always used to greatest effect during the whole class teaching parts of lessons. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to use and develop their writing skills across the curriculum. In most classes, pupils judge their own learning success at the end of lessons using a simple colour code. They do this thoughtfully and it supports their learning well because they are more aware of the progress they are making. There is also good practice in marking that guides pupils to next steps in learning but this is not consistent in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a broad and balanced range of classroom and other activities. It is supported by an effective system of curricular reviews that ensures that all subjects meet the needs of pupils throughout the school. Pupils' positive curricular experiences are reflected in the high quality of pupils' work displayed around the school, which makes it an attractive place in which to learn. The English curriculum is a particular strength, but mathematics is rightly an area which the school is developing further. ICT features well in other subjects and enhances pupils' learning. The provision of specialist French and art teaching for all pupils is a significant strength and there are increased opportunities for outdoor and environmental education. Emphasis on physical education ensures that pupils get plenty of exercise, which they enjoy. Older pupils appreciate additional enrichment activities such as sports clubs, choir, instrumental lessons and residential visits. However, some pupils commented that younger pupils have fewer visits to places of interest. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned and provides children with a good start to their education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents agree that the school is a very secure, happy place for their children. One parent praised the 'excellent additional support' for their child's learning needs. The high quality personal support and care for pupils result in outstanding personal development. Systems to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils are rigorous and effective. As a result, bullying is rare and pupils say

that they feel safe. Pupils who need extra support are particularly well cared for and there is good liaison with outside agencies to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils who are gifted or talented are suitably identified and guided to take up additional activities in school or with local clubs. Detailed assessment systems closely track pupils' academic progress so that extra support is provided for any who fall behind in their learning. However, guidance for higher attaining pupils is less well developed, especially in mathematics. Pupils know their English and mathematics targets, which are displayed in class; for instance, Year 2 pupils confidently explained theirs, pinpointing in their writing where they were achieving their goals of using interesting words and punctuation.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The staff are highly motivated and work well together as a cohesive and effective team. They are committed to ensuring that the clear and inclusive ethos of the school permeates all its work and that weaknesses are swiftly identified and addressed. The school evaluates itself well and the headteacher provides very effective leadership, ably supported by the good management skills of the deputy headteacher and senior teacher. Curricular leaders have a good understanding of their subjects because an effective system of curricular review ensures the accurate monitoring of their subjects throughout the school and enables them to identify suitable priorities for development. Extensive assessment data are gathered and these are well used to inform whole school improvement planning and set challenging targets, although this is not yet as effective in mathematics. Good cohesion between monitoring and improvement planning ensures a strong focus on raising standards. The positive impact of this is exemplified by recent significant improvements in writing.

All staff benefit from professional development opportunities that link to the school's development plan and performance management cycle, although this is less well developed for support staff. Resources are deployed well and the school provides good value for money. Governors know the school well and provide a suitable balance between challenge and support.

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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 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 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	2
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?	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?	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

1 February 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Wansdyke Community Primary School, Devizes SN10 5EF

Thank you for being so very friendly and welcoming when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing your lessons, talking to you and the grown-ups and looking at your work. This letter is to let you know what we found out about your school, which we think is a good one!

The things that we think are particularly good are:

- Your behaviour is fantastic and you have really good attitudes towards your learning and each other; we loved seeing how well you got on with each other and cared for everyone. Well done!
- You are very well cared for by the adults, and are very aware about how to keep yourselves safe.
- You enjoy coming to school because the teaching is good and you make good progress, especially in English.
- The school is well led and the people in charge know how to make it even better.

We have asked the school to look at two things which will help to make your school even better than it is.

- Make sure that mathematics teaching is even better so that you make quicker progress in this subject; you can help by working really hard to get better results in mathematics.
- Make sure that in every class marking gives you clearer help about how you can improve and really pushes those of you who do well to do even better.

Many thanks again for making us so welcome.

Yours sincerely

Chris Nye Her Majesty's Inspector

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