

Wroughton Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126245
Local Authority	Swindon
Inspection number	328470
Inspection date	17 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Patricia Davies

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)	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Valerie Johnston
Headteacher	Steve Menham
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2005
School address	Inverary Road Wroughton Swindon SN4 9DL
Telephone number	01793 812339
Fax number	01793 845512

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

the impact of the school's work to increase the achievement of girls, lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

the degree to which lesson activities motivate, excite and challenge pupils to do their very best

how effectively monitoring activities are used to tackle and resolve changes in the school's academic profile and performance.

Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, pupils' work, assessment information, school documentation, questionnaires returned by parents and discussions with staff, pupils and the chair of the governing body. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Wroughton Junior is a large school taking almost all its pupils from the nearby Wroughton Infants School. Local trends in the population mean that the number of pupils attending Wroughton Junior School has continued to fall over recent years. At the same time, the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has increased to just above average. Most of these pupils have learning needs. With very few exceptions, the small minority of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds already speak English well when they join the school. The local secondary school is very close by and a privately run playgroup is also situated on the school's site. The school runs a breakfast club each morning and a few pupils in Years 1 and 2 attend from the infant school. An after-school club operates from the infant school and is attended by pupils from Wroughton Junior School.

There have been many changes to staff during the last school year and at the beginning of this term, including some senior leaders.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wroughton Junior is a good school. The very large majority of parents are very pleased with what it offers and it is equally popular with its pupils. Indeed, pupils can think of few things to make the school even better, expressing the view that it 'is a good school already'!

Pupils achieve well both personally and academically and, as a result, receive a good start for the future. They are polite and well behaved, work hard in lessons and are thoughtful and considerate to others. These qualities endorse the good pastoral support provided by the school. Parents especially praise the care taken to ensure a smooth transition from the infant school and a happy, confident start to Year 3. The shared breakfast club offers a valuable service to parents and gives the small group of pupils it serves a safe and friendly start to the day. There is a healthy breakfast on offer and a well-supervised walk to school afterwards for those pupils from the infant school. Both schools have recognised the potential for further collaboration, particularly to share academic information more extensively at the point of transition. There are secure arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare and safeguarding arrangements are thorough. School buildings have been refurbished with much care, so that the school is bright, clean and tidy. Attendance is above average. A small increase in unauthorised absence reflects the school's firm stance over absence in general and, especially, holidays taken during term time. Pupils are sensitive to the safety of others. They know, for example, that soft footballs are necessary in the playground, even though the harder version might be preferable!

Attainment on entry to Year 3 has varied over the years and is now above average. The school's assessment information shows that standards in the current Year 6 have been maintained at above average levels in English and mathematics. National test results at Year 6 show that the school does well with its higher attaining pupils. The school recognised, however, that it needed to pay closer attention to the attainment of girls and to its lower attaining pupils. The action it took last year to resolve these issues has met with success – and particularly in narrowing the gap between the performance of boys and girls. With some variations within year groups and between subjects, progress as a whole is good. Pupils complete a wide range and good quantity of work. They also benefit from clear learning targets and consistent feedback on how to improve their work. Neat, tidy work, often presented in imaginative ways, illustrates pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Teachers are quick to comment when presentation very occasionally falls short of their high expectations. Clear and detailed assessment information, regular checks on progress and discussion about the performance of each pupil ensure that challenging targets are set for future attainment.

Teaching is good. Learning is carefully structured and pupils gain much from tackling tasks and problems systematically and methodically. The recent drive to meet the different learning needs of boys and girls has led to greater opportunities for discussion, including talk with a partner or from the use of drama. Such strategies are now a common feature of lessons, although the school recognises that there is scope for making more of these opportunities in order to accelerate progress further. For example, changes to provision for lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties mean that their particular needs are met well within small teaching groups. In particular, these pupils are required to explain their ideas and how they have worked things out to a much greater degree than is found in other lessons. This approach has a marked impact on their progress and they clearly enjoy the challenge. Where this practice is not as well developed, pupils often struggle to explain why, for instance, they have selected

a particular approach to solving a mathematical problem or chosen a particular example when exploring a text.

The great variety and breadth of the school's extra-curricular activities are particularly popular with pupils and a significant feature of the school's good curriculum. The wide range of sporting activities includes fencing and sailing; there are arts weeks, samba lessons, visiting storytellers and Spanish, for instance, in addition to the usual curriculum. A number of these activities provide a valuable extension to the experience of pupils with particular gifts or talents. There are also increasingly close links with schools in Spain and South Africa and these give pupils a vital glimpse of life beyond their own and of their global responsibilities towards others. For example, their fund raising has helped to roof one of their linked schools in Africa. Staff are working hard to bring the richness and enjoyment of these additional activities into the school's everyday subject curriculum. They are keen to make full use of new opportunities created by, for example, the flexibility of new national planning for English and mathematics. Pupils like the links forged between subjects such as history and English, and a careful coverage of scientific knowledge and understanding is enhanced by some exciting investigations at the younger end of the school.

Capacity for further improvement is good. The headteacher and staff are enthusiastic and eager to push ahead, fully embed new practices and build on success. The governing body is kept well informed and maintains a close check on the progress of areas that have been prioritised for improvement. Formal management structures ensure all staff members share accountability for the school's effectiveness. A few parents expressed some anxiety about the recent changes to staff. However, there has been thorough preparation for the arrival of new staff, and those at the start of their teaching career report that they feel very well supported. Senior leaders are extremely reflective about their work. Careful analysis of data and the regular canvassing of views from pupils, parents and staff give the school a clear view of what it needs to do to increase its effectiveness. The quality of teaching is widely monitored. Nevertheless, senior staff have already identified that these checks do not yet place enough emphasis on the quality and extent of pupils' learning as a means of evaluating the success of what happens in lessons. Consequently, the school is not yet gaining all the information it could to guide and support improvements to classroom practice.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make full use of discussion during lessons to accelerate progress further, and particularly to ensure that all pupils explore and explain their ideas and thinking.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is evaluated by its impact on pupils' learning in order to give teachers greater guidance and support on how to improve their classroom practice.

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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 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/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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wroughton Junior School, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 9DL

I enjoyed my visit to your school and thank you for making me so welcome. My thanks also to those of you who took the time to talk to me about their work when I visited your lessons and, especially, to the small group who met with me just before lunch. You all gave me lots of helpful information.

This letter is to tell you some of the things I have found out about your school. First and foremost, yours is a good school, and it was very clear that you think so too! I was pleased to hear how much you enjoy the really wide range of exciting activities that the school offers you and of the links you have with schools in Africa and Spain. I am also pleased to say that you make good progress and this prepares you well for your future. The staff and governors work hard on your behalf and are keen for you to do well. They have gone to a lot of trouble to make your school a bright and attractive place to be.

Here are some other important things about you and your school

- You are polite, friendly and well behaved, and work hard in lessons.
- You like the exciting things that are happening in lessons and you benefit from being taught to work things out and complete your work carefully.
- Adults in the school take good care of you and keep a close check on your progress.
- Your school is popular with your parents, and they are particularly pleased with the arrangements for settling in those of you new to the school at Year 3.

This is what your school has been asked to do to make things even better

- Make sure that you are given lots of opportunities to explore and explain your ideas and thinking, so that you make even faster progress.
- Ensure that checks on the quality of teaching also always look carefully at how well you are doing during the lesson.

With best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Patricia Davies Lead inspector