

Wilkes Green Infant School (NC)

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103308
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336054
Inspection dates	15–16 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Judi Bedawi

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Icilda Smith (Acting)
Headteacher	Heather Brookes
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 11 teachers in 15 lessons or parts of lessons. They held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and school improvement advisors. They talked informally to parents and many pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, classroom displays, a range of documentation, policies, monitoring records and data on pupils' attainment. The inspectors received and analysed 74 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' attendance over the last year
- the impact of strategies recently introduced to raise standards and achievement
- communications with parents and carers.

Information about the school

Wilkes Green is larger than most other infant schools. Pupils come from the local urban area. The very large majority are from a wide range of different minority ethnic groups, predominately with Asian and African heritages. A small proportion is at the early stages of learning to speak English. There are very few White British pupils. The proportion of pupils having special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average and predominantly for speech and language needs. The proportion having a statement of special educational needs is below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of the Nursery and three Reception classes. The headteacher was appointed in February 2009 and the deputy headteacher in January 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils arrive happy, ready to learn and do their best in lessons within a caring and supportive learning environment. Parents and carers agree that their children enjoy school life.

The astute headteacher and her strong new leadership team have identified well-placed priorities and established good initiatives, steadfastly focused on raising standards from the very start. This has led, for example, to significantly improved attendance and rigorous staff assessment of pupils' progress.

Attainment on entry to the Nursery is below average, especially in communication, language, social and mathematical development. A small proportion of children benefit from the high level of adult support to develop their skills in learning English. This support also aids the learning of the very few children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children's physical development is a strength. They make good progress, particularly in speaking, listening, building friendships, counting and in 'learning to learn'. This good progress continues into the Reception Year. It is noteworthy in writing, accelerated by the introduction of focused letters and sounds work. Children regularly write full sentences and know how to use capital letters and full stops. Most children move into Year 1 with attainment in line with national averages, with a very few above. However, progress slows in Year 1. This is because teaching does not consistently build on pupils' prior knowledge to provide sufficient challenge, expectation and pace to move learning. Pupils' progress accelerates through Year 2, so that attainment has improved well since 2009, most evident in reading and writing. Improvement in mathematics is slightly lower. Higher attaining pupils do not always reach their full potential as lesson activities do not always provide them with sufficient challenge.

Pupils' personal development is good. They gain confidence as they move through the school. They concentrate well, enthusiastically absorbing new facts and skills, asking many questions of the adults who care for them well. Curriculum activities are well-planned, focused on developing pupils' skills. Occasionally, teachers do not prepare sufficiently for pupils to work and write independently. Pupils know their local community well with plans in place to extend their knowledge of national and global issues. Behaviour is good and pupils readily help each other. They feel safe and have a good understanding of eating sensibly. The very recently established school council provides pupils with a positive voice, but parents are less positive about their own involvement in school life. They receive too little information about their children's education and how they can best help at home or in school.

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Senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well, through rigorous self-evaluation of performance and monitoring. Governors are increasingly aware of their responsibilities. Previous issues have been addressed well. Strong leadership and improved attendance, progress and attainment since the previous inspection demonstrate the school's good capacity to continue to improve in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics by:
 - developing pupils' understanding and skills in problem-solving and calculation to accelerate their progress
 - increasing and sustaining challenge in all lessons for potentially higher attaining pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Year 1 by:
 - sharing existing good practice to accelerate the pace of learning and raise teachers' expectations to ensure pupils make the progress of which they are capable
 - providing pupils with regular and stimulating opportunities to record their work independently.
- Improve parental communications by:
 - establishing better channels for sharing and distributing information with parents and carers
 - involving parents much more in the life and work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

From their earliest days in school, pupils settle quickly to learning. They enjoy well-planned activities that interest them and this sparks their enthusiasm for learning. They ask many thoughtful questions, as seen during the inspection in an exhilarating Reception class lesson on letter and sounds. A small group at the early stages of learning to speak English worked closely with the teaching assistant learning a new sound blend 'sh', practising hard to get it right. They initially struggled for another name for 'boat', but soon thought of 'ship', independently. The rest of the class buzzed with ideas, talking in pairs about 'ai' words such as 'fair'. The teacher skilfully extended this to encourage full sentence responses. This rapidly led to some excellent well-formed writing. A boy using the interactive whiteboard independently, wrote and correctly spelt, 'my hair is growing'; other children quickly told him that he had forgotten the capital letter and full stop.

Pupils make good progress from their starting points with independence fostered well as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are just starting to learn English, also make good progress due to the very good adult/child ratios. However, progress

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slows in Year 1 because teachers do not challenge pupils enough or build consistently on prior learning, repeating already known skills. As pupils move into Year 2, learning accelerates, so that pupils generally reach the standards expected nationally, with several ethnic groups performing better than expected this year. However, too few potentially higher attaining pupils reach their goals.

Attendance is satisfactory and much improved in the last year, with few families taking extended holidays abroad during term time. Pupils' behaviour is good even when lessons are uninspiring. They are sensible and mature, readily helping each other. They play amicably, with peer mediators responsibly helping those who are shy or new to the school. Lunchtime lining-up procedures are not well organised by midday supervisors, so that a very few pupils become rather silly and this is not challenged.

Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, enjoying salads and participating keenly during well practised sports day events. The school council now provides pupils with a clear voice and involvement in fundraising. Pupils know their local community well but have less awareness of communities that are different to their own. They really enjoy assemblies saying, 'If you are clever, you get to stand up in assembly!' They feel well prepared to move on to their next stage of their education through visits to the junior school sharing the same site.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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How effective is the provision?

Teamwork is a strength of the good teaching. Well trained teaching assistants are fully involved in assessing, planning and supporting pupils' learning. In most classes teachers' subject knowledge and range of teaching strategies are good and occasionally outstanding, so that pupils are fully engaged and learn at a lively pace. Questioning mostly leads to thoughtful responses. In a minority of lessons more time is spent in explanation rather than learning. Additionally, expectations of pupils are insufficiently high so that work is sometimes pitched too low to offer real challenge. Marking is consistently good with helpful comments for pupils to improve and assess their work. Pupils know how well they are moving towards achieving their targets. Relationships between staff and pupils are good.

The curriculum is well developed, adapted and resourced to meet pupils' wide ranging needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. There is a good measure of creativity in developing pupils' basic skills with use of themed subject weeks.

Information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy are embedded well across all areas of learning, increasing pupils' confidence and interests. Pupils needing short term help are identified promptly and well supported through focused intervention work. Their personal development is enriched by regular visits, visitors and attendance at after-school clubs.

Pastoral care and attention to pupils' well-being is a high priority for all staff. There are very good systems to support pupils and families whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. The school has good access to many support agencies and community groups representing different ethnic groups, and uses its contacts well to overcome any barriers to learning. Monitoring of welfare procedures including health and safety practice is good. Attendance has improved with introduction of parental liaison workers. Transition arrangements build pupils' sense of security at moving on. Parents are confident that their children are well cared for and nurtured.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has moved on well with the establishment of a skilled senior leadership team, clearly focused on raising standards, with ambition and drive at all levels of

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management. This is having a positive impact on pupil outcomes. The governing body is willing and keen to support the school but is still developing their skills in challenging senior leaders and fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as 'critical friends'.

Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory and meet government requirements, particularly in pupils' awareness of staying safe. While partnerships to promote learning are good, and particularly so with the nearby junior school, partnerships with parents' are satisfactory. The school has not done enough to keep parents informed or involved in the school's work. For example, only a handful of parents attended the sports day and there are no newsletters to celebrate pupil achievement and other events.

Community cohesion is satisfactory with positive links to its local area. The school's audit fully identifies the need to develop awareness of other communities in the United Kingdom and globally. Equality of opportunity is good as pupils generally achieve well and respect each others' cultures and beliefs. Diversity is celebrated with pupils knowing that discrimination is unacceptable and will be challenged.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get a lively start to education. They find learning through play fun. The well-planned activities enable them to develop their skills in all areas of learning from the Nursery onwards. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-directed learning that encourages independence and discovery. Staff are skilled at developing children's ideas and 'tweaking' them to encourage the development of, for example, early writing and number work. As a result, children thrive as they realise their own

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strengths so that their progress is consistently good. They show good concentration and sustained interest, explaining what they are doing extremely well. Those who need additional support, whatever their needs, receive it because there are many well-trained support staff to help. There is good provision for all aspects of learning including use of outdoor areas which is carefully planned to ensure access for all three classes. Teaching is imaginative and increases children's curiosity and desire for more. Staff understand the needs of young children well. Leadership and management are good as is staff teamwork. Daily pupil progress is shared between staff and used to plan for and extend children's own interests. Some teaching practice is inspirational in raising children's outcomes. Parental links, particularly in the Nursery, are sound but there is room for further improvement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire fully agree that their children enjoy school. The overwhelming majority agree that they are kept well informed about their children's progress and that the school encourages children to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. Most parents agree that they are supported well to help learning at home and that their children make enough progress at school. They further agree that teaching and their children's behaviour are good and most are happy with the quality of education provided. A few parents have reservations about arrangements to prepare children to move to their next class or school, information about progress, the way their suggestions and concerns are dealt with and the school's leadership and management. The inspectors agree with parents and carers that there is room to improve communications and the sharing of information including pupils' progress, and to acknowledge parental views. The inspectors also agree with parents' positive views. Evidence and observation during inspection showed teaching, transition arrangements, and leadership and management to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wilkes Green Infant School (NC) to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 330 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	66	25	34	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	58	29	39	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	59	28	38	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	55	27	36	4	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	46	62	22	30	5	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	55	26	35	5	7	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	49	36	49	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	32	43	34	46	1	1	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	42	39	53	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	51	30	41	3	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	45	32	43	7	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	37	50	28	38	5	7	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	46	62	24	32	2	3	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wilkes Green Infant School (NC), Birmingham, B21 9NT

Thank you for giving us such a friendly welcome when we visited your good school recently. You asked us many questions and also told us what you like doing at school. You enjoy mathematics, handwriting, sport and using computers. You have raised a lot of money for new playground equipment and a shed to keep it in. You are pleased that you now have a school council. We can see that you work hard and that you get rewards if you come to school every day, keep it up.

You do well at school because the grown-ups do a good job in helping you to learn and they take care to make sure that you are happy. They think of lots of interesting activities that make you want to find out for yourselves. You can help them by saying if work is too easy for you or if you have done it before. Your behaviour is good, but a few of you are not always sensible when lining up after play.

Your headteacher and the staff want to make your school even better. I have asked them to:

- help you get better at working out mathematical problems in different ways
- provide harder work for those of you who find learning easy
- make sure that lessons in Year 1 are interesting and do not repeat things you already know, so you can learn and discover much more in every lesson
- think of ways to tell your mums and dads about what happens in school and to help them get more involved in school life.

I hope you continue to have a good time at school and enjoy learning many things.

Yours sincerely

Judi Bedawi

Lead inspector

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