

Wilson Stuart School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103612
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336115
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2010
Reporting inspector	David Muir HMI

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	32
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stella Thebridge
Headteacher	Steve Hughes
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2006
School address	Perry Common Road Erdington Birmingham
Telephone number	0121 373 4475
Fax number	0121 373 9842
Email address	enquiry@wilsonst.bham.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Sixteen lessons were observed and 16 teachers seen; meetings were held with 2 groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and staff, including those new in to the school. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including the school development plan, School Improvement Partner report, the Investors in People assessment report, a variety of action plans and monitoring and evaluation documents and 81 parents' and carers' questionnaires were analysed.

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

- the accuracy of the school's monitoring of pupils' progress across all areas of the school
- how well the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils in all key stages, including the sixth form, so that they are ready to transfer to the next stage of their lives
- how well the management raises and maintains expectations and aspirations across the school.
- how well the teaching meets the needs of all pupils taking into account their special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about the school

Wilson Stuart is a large special school for pupils with physical disabilities and complex medical needs. Ninety per cent of the pupils also have additional needs and 34% use some form of alternative and augmentative communication. The sixth form has been developed since the previous inspection and is now based on-site and at Aston Villa Football Club. The school has been a specialist sports college for five years. It has now been identified as a high performing specialist school and has a second specialism in applied learning. It also runs a community outreach service. The school currently has 14 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and 32 students in the sixth form.

As at the time of the previous inspection, less than half of pupils are from White British backgrounds and the rest are from other ethnic backgrounds, mainly Asian. Pupils come from a wide mix of social backgrounds. Nearly half of the pupils have a language other than English as their first language.

The school has received a range of recognition and awards including; Healthy Schools Award, Sportsmark, the International School Award and Investors in People.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Wilson Stuart School excels in every aspect of its work. Its ethos places the success of every child and young person in the school at the centre of every decision made, lesson planned and subject taught. Nevertheless, the school continues to strive for even higher standards in all that it does. Staff have high levels of commitment and professionalism which enable the school to set and achieve ambitious targets. A superb array of partnerships contributes outstandingly to the level of education and care. Foremost is the exemplary and inspiring work by the team responsible for developing the sports specialism. This has contributed significantly to the raising of standards in all areas.

The dynamic senior leadership team provide impressive drive, passion and vision which permeate through to all members of the school community. Staff work very effectively as a team, supporting, challenging and inspiring each other in equal measure to reach ever higher standards. There is an impressive common sense of purpose in all areas of the school and staff are encouraged to contribute their ideas to the school development process. They enthuse about the opportunities that they have to take risks and they know they will receive all the encouragement and support they need to make new initiatives resoundingly successful. Pupils' views are taken very seriously, through the student forum and other systems, and they play an important part in making the school the success that it is.

All groups of pupils make excellent progress, in line with the outstanding teaching. Despite this, the school works tirelessly to improve the quality of teaching still further. Staff know pupils well and match work to suit the needs, levels and abilities in the class. The school's own monitoring systems have been painstakingly developed to identify trends in the progress of individuals and groups of pupils by key stages, subjects and special educational needs. The school moderates its judgements against national benchmarks and sets increasingly challenging targets. Pupils feel safe, and parents and carers agree with this view. All aspects of safeguarding are excellent.

The recent introduction of the second specialism of applied learning has already had a impressive impact on the work of the school and plans are in place to modify the outstanding individualised and finely tuned curriculum further to incorporate this throughout the school. The outstanding effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that pupils receive the best possible start to school and the exciting work of the sixth form ensures that the highest expectations are maintained as the students prepare to move to the next stages of their lives.

Pupils enjoy school, and are highly positive about all aspects of its work. They know their targets and have clear ideas about what they want to do when they leave school.

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The outstanding quality of care, guidance and support is a particular strength of the school. A range of complementary therapies such as music therapy and aromatherapy are used to calm pupils and to improve their readiness for learning. A variety of visits and visitors, and residential visits support the curriculum very well in providing additional, high quality learning experiences for pupils.

The accurate view that leaders have of the school and the significant improvements evident since the previous inspection, demonstrate that it has outstanding capacity to continue to make sustained improvement. The governing body has an in-depth understanding of its role and there is clear evidence of impact of its work in supporting and challenging at all levels of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- No areas for improvement were identified, which the school is not already aware, planning for and addressing successfully.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Due to their special educational needs and/or disabilities, the attainment of the large majority of pupils on entry to the school and when they leave is low. Since the previous inspection, pupils are now given more opportunities to gain external qualifications by the development of the impressive sixth form. These include; Entry Level Certificates, an increasing offer of ASDAN (Awards Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Awards and GCSEs. As a result, all pupils leave school with externally accredited qualifications and all go on to continue in full-time education. In 2009, two pupils also gained five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C.

The outstanding progress made by pupils is supported by their high quality learning and rapid progress in lessons at all key stages. The school's evidence also supports the outstanding judgement for excellent progress over time. The monitoring of groups shows that there is no difference in the progress of any groups in relation to their starting points and abilities. There is no evidence of bullying in the school and it is an exceptionally harmonious and welcoming community. Behaviour was outstanding throughout the inspection and this judgement concurs with the school's records of behaviour. Pupils' work in the local community is exceptional. They support in a local residential home, provide disability awareness training in primary schools and audit local businesses with regard to accessibility for people with disabilities amongst many other extremely positive activities. They also participate in many community activities such as in the recent "Celebration of Life" where the school choir sung alongside other community choirs at the event organised by Aston Villa Football Club. Partnerships with local employers, alongside enterprise days and interview days with local businesses and many other enterprise based events mean that pupils develop workplace skills to an outstanding level. Despite some absences due to the serious and complex medical needs of some pupils, attendance is high in all key stages. The pupils are heavily involved in organising a notable number of fund raising events such as the annual school garden

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party, which is a well respected feature of the local community's annual diary. The school works actively to provide opportunities to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds and this has helped to promote a very strong awareness of cultural issues. Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong and are given ample opportunities to develop an awareness of themselves and others, which they embrace readily.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

All teaching seen during the inspection was at least good, with much being outstanding and this agrees with the school's own monitoring. In the best lessons, planning is exceptionally well matched to the needs of the pupils and activities reflect the range and diversity of pupils. Support is extremely well focused allowing it to be targeted as effectively as possible. The exciting and relevant teaching activities make learning enjoyable. One example was a Year 7 lesson on video-editing with relevant references

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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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to Clash of the Titans. This resulted in all pupils being able to produce two minute video clips. Planning shows effective linking of prior learning, knowledge of pupils' levels and abilities and a variety of extremely well matched activities so that all pupils are able to make at least good and often outstanding progress. Links between individual education and care plans and lesson plans are clear and very effective. The extensive knowledge which staff have of individual learning styles and the respect and dignity which they show the pupils, contribute markedly to the overall outstanding progress being made.

In all key stages, the curriculum meets the needs of pupils remarkably well. The leadership is working to ensure that the curriculum on offer continues to grow to provide increasing opportunities. There is an extensive range of partnerships with external agencies, the local community and the Connexions service which ensure that pupils are given access to a wide range of information, advice and guidance about their future options. This was notable in the impressive meetings with pupils during the inspection when all pupils had a clear view of their pathways up to the end of school and beyond. The school's work leading its sport partnership with local primary, secondary and independent schools has significantly raised standards in this area in all of the schools involved. The leadership provided by Wilson Stuart in this area of its area of specialism has been exceptional and is valued by the partners.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are seen as the responsibility of all staff in the school. This had led to the whole school community having a strong sense of purpose and exceptionally high expectations of all; staff, pupils, parents, partners and governors alike. The school sets and achieves ambitious targets in all areas. Staff questionnaires show that staff feel valued in the contribution that they make to the school. The outstanding senior leadership team, led by an inspirational headteacher has developed a passionate vision and an expectation that all areas of the school be outstanding, which has been realised. Despite their continued success, the school staff and leadership, show great humility and are aware of the need to work hard to maintain standards at as high a level as possible.

All members of the school are encouraged to contribute to plans for the school's development. Senior leaders and other staff have a good understanding of the strengths within the school and have clear plans for further improvement. The representative

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student forum demonstrates the inclusive ethos of the school and its work to tackle discrimination, with equality of opportunity being at the heart of everything that it does. The school's work on community cohesion is outstanding. This is due to the intricate analysis of the school's community and context, the establishment of very effective action plans to promote its work within the community locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, and extremely effective evaluation of the action plans and the impact that they have had on raising standards. The school's safeguarding procedures and policies, including child protection are outstanding in all aspects and show that all adults working with pupils are appropriately recruited and vetted. The high quality leadership of the school's specialisms, including the impressive rigour of action plans as well as their implementation and evaluation, have had a notable impact on the leadership and management throughout the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Standards are low on entry due to the childrens' special educational needs and/or disabilities and they remain low throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Despite this, the outstanding quality of the provision and teaching in this stage, alongside an extremely effective curriculum and excellent care, results in at least good and often outstanding progress being made. Planning and assessment are of the highest quality and meet the needs of all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The quality of the curriculum is outstanding, being carefully matched to meet the needs of all children very effectively. The Early Years Foundation Stage is extremely well led and managed and the lead teacher has an exceptionally good understanding of children of

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this age who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Partnerships with parents and other professionals are impressive and well planned, contributing very well to the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the children. Relationships throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage are remarkably positive with the children being empowered by encountering such positive interaction in their learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Sixth form

The sixth form is outstanding in all areas of its work. The 'Villa Vocation' aspect makes up the majority of the sixth form work and is based at Villa Park with funding support from the Premier League. The sixth form is a very well planned and executed provision providing an increasing array of accredited and non-accredited courses. These include ASDAN Awards in Employability and Personal and Social Development. The experiences provided offer genuine and realistic qualification and opportunities to enhance students' prospects of positive progression routes when they leave school. One outstanding example of this is the work that the students do in auditing local companies, including Aston Villa FC and the local leisure centre to provide advice on how to make their facilities more accessible. Students who have also gained a qualification in disability sports awareness provide training in local primary schools for the pupils, who in turn coach the younger pupils in Wilson Stuart in sports activities. If the barriers to employment are too great, then the school aims for all students to be able to be involved in some form of voluntary or community work, so that they are gainfully engaged when they leave full time education. The school has a strong tradition of all of its students moving on to the next stage of full-time education, with no students being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs).

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

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Views of parents and carers

A high number of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire and the responses were overwhelmingly positive in all areas. The responses and comments generally reflected the inspectors' and school's judgements. Although a very few areas of concern were raised, such as 'My child is making enough progress at this school' being graded as 'disagree' by a small number of parents, the inspection did not find any evidence to support these concerns. The findings of the inspection support the overwhelmingly positive view of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wilson Stuart School 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 140 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	58	33	41	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	70	23	28	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	52	37	46	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	49	36	44	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	56	35	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	51	36	44	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	48	38	47	3	4	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)	37	46	40	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	54	33	41	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	51	34	42	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	46	40	49	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	44	54	31	38	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	65	25	31	0	0	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.



30 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wilson Stuart School, Birmingham, B23 7AT

I am writing to you on behalf of the two inspectors who visited your school recently to say thank you very much for making our visit so memorable, interesting and enjoyable.

We agreed with you that Wilson Stuart School is an outstanding school in every way.

The headteacher, staff and governors all work very hard to make your time in school very happy and successful. You enjoy school and you make excellent progress while you are there. Your parents and carers are extremely happy with how well the school educates and looks after you all. Your personal development is an amazing strength of the school and we were particularly impressed by our meetings with you and the times that we spent at lunchtime and break times talking with you and hearing what you had to say. It was genuinely inspiring to see your confidence and self-belief. You work very hard to improve your personal and academic skills and you clearly enjoy your lessons. You have good attitudes to learning and you should all be very proud of yourselves. I know that the staff and your parents and carers are all proud of you.

Yours sincerely

David Muir

Her Majesty's Inspector

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