

Wellfield Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106304
Local Authority	Trafford
Inspection number	336654
Inspection dates	24–25 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Jim Kidd

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Nicola Lewis
Headteacher	Ms Sandra Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, one of whom examined the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed each teacher in the classroom. Inspectors spent over half of the allotted time observing pupils' learning. They held meetings with the Chair of Governors, teaching and support staff and groups of pupils, including representatives of the school council. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including relevant policies, school improvement plans and analyses of pupils' attainment and progress. They also considered 76 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 18 returned by staff and 94 returned by pupils.

- pupils' learning, progress and achievement across the school since the previous inspection
- the impact of the school's strategies to improve pupils' performance in mathematics
- the level of challenge in lessons, to encourage pupils to reach for higher standards
- the philosophy behind and the impact of recently introduced curricular initiatives
- the rigour and accuracy of school self-evaluation at all levels of leadership.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school which is situated in the suburban village of Ashton on Mersey. Since the previous inspection, the school has admitted a greater number of pupils from further afield. Most pupils are of White British heritage and there are very few who are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. There is a broadly average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Over the previous 12 months a new deputy headteacher has been appointed and there have been significant additions to the senior leadership team. Wellfield has Healthy Schools accreditation, holds Eco-School Silver status, has both the Artsmark and the Activemark and received the DCSF International Award at foundation level in 2009.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Wellfield is a satisfactory school in which pupils' attendance and behaviour are both outstanding. Pupils are proactive in their work for charity and do much to support each other, their local community and also communities further afield. They love their school and comment, 'We have so many interesting things to do here and our teachers always help us when we find things hard.'

Pupils enter Year 3 with consistently above average attainment. Their progress and achievement across the school are satisfactory, overall, and they reach above average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Attainment in English is particularly impressive, but standards in mathematics have lagged behind over time and are only now beginning to rise.

Teaching is satisfactory, overall, with some good and outstanding features, but inconsistent in quality. Expectations, particularly for more-able pupils, are not always as high as they should be. Nonetheless, pupils enjoy their lessons and benefit from the high-quality displays that support learning and also from a curriculum that now has an international dimension and is meeting their needs, interests and aspirations increasingly closely. Pupils speak highly of the wide range of enrichment activities open to them.

Parents and carers, and pupils are justified in their belief that care, guidance and support are good. Pupils feel safe and valued in school. Indeed, as a result of impressive support from teaching assistants and other ancillary staff, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress and achieve well.

The headteacher and senior leadership team have an increasingly secure understanding of the school's strengths and have identified its areas for development. Leaders recognise, for example, that more focused lesson observations, including the sharing of good practice through paired teaching, are key if inconsistencies in teaching are to be eliminated. Since the previous inspection, there have been significant improvements in pupils' understanding of personal safety and in teachers' handling of any inappropriate behaviour. Improvements in pupils' performance in mathematics have been less secure, but strategies introduced are now beginning to take effect and standards in this subject are now rising. Middle leaders are now more involved in the school's self-evaluation. However, the governing body does not hold the leadership team sufficiently to account. As a result, the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement and it provides satisfactory value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Improve attainment in mathematics by:
 - - providing pupils with more opportunities to develop their numeracy skills across all areas of the curriculum
 - - addressing shortcomings, already identified by the school, in pupils' attainment in division, fractions and time.
- Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching by:
 - - further developing paired teaching and paired observations of lessons, in order to share good practice across the school
 - - ensuring that expectations, particularly for more-able pupils, are high enough and encourage pupils to aim for the highest standards.
- Sharpen the monitoring of school performance by:
 - - extending and formalising more focused lesson observations by senior leaders
 - - ensuring that the governing body holds the school leaders more rigorously to account
 - - building on existing good practice in involving middle leaders in regular school self-evaluation and review.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' achievement from their starting points is satisfactory, overall, but those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. All pupils enjoy their lessons. They are becoming increasingly engaged in their learning as a result of the introduction of the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), which captures their interest and enables them to see links between subjects.

As a result of a dip in pupils' progress in mathematics over a three-year period, overall progress and attainment began to decline. The 2009 Year 6 national test results and inspection evidence, including lesson observations, demonstrate that this decline has been arrested and, overall, attainment is again above average. Standards in mathematics, however, although rising, are still not as high as they could be. Pupils' skills in division, fractions and time are not sharp enough and this has been identified by the school. Nonetheless, standards in literacy are a strength of the school and pupils are rightly proud of their skills in reading and expressive writing. However, across the curriculum, too few more-able pupils are reaching the National Curriculum levels expected of them.

'The Station', a charity shop run by Year 6 pupils, is just one example of pupils' enviable social conscience and of their willingness to support people less fortunate than themselves. The NSPCC, the Cumbria Flood Recovery Fund and a local hospice have all benefited from the generosity of Wellfield pupils. Pupils have a high regard for their teachers and it is a joy to see pupils' smiling faces when they enter school in the morning, sometimes having taken part, with their teachers, in the 'Wake up, shake up!' session. Pupils' attendance is high and their behaviour in lessons and around school is

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excellent. They are welcoming to visitors and are very keen to show them their work and to talk about their school, of which they are very proud. The school council, eco warriors and playtime activity leaders have a high reputation in school and work hard to ensure that all can take full advantage of everything on offer. Pupils have a good awareness of healthy eating and of what makes a balanced diet. They know just why it is so important to keep fit and the take-up of sports and games is higher than usually seen. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good: their involvement in singing, drama and art are major strengths and the range of annual school and class productions is legion. Pupils' singing in assembly is a delight to hear.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Relationships between pupils and between pupils and the adults who work with them are strong. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, with some that is excellent, but it is inconsistent across the school. Where challenge is realistic and expectations are high, pupils are motivated to aim above their targets. For example, in an outstanding Year 5 literacy lesson about the Apollo II moon landing in 1969, excellent use was made of

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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music and film to set the scene. The teacher's probing questions encouraged pupils to consider the feelings of the astronauts during the launch and resulted in pupils' expressive writing of the highest quality. As one pupil wrote, 'The moon is a silver boat, cruising slowly across the night sky.'

Too often, however, challenge is not high enough, particularly for more-able pupils, and teachers direct activities too much and do not require pupils to increase their responsibility for their learning. The school has plans to introduce some paired teaching, including paired lesson observations, to facilitate the sharing of good practice. Teachers' ongoing assessment in class of how well their pupils are doing is good and marking gives pupils detailed and accurate advice on how they can improve their work.

The IPC is already beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment and achievement. There are examples of impressive cross-curricular approaches which encourage pupils to see the links between topics and to reinforce skills which are common across subjects. Mathematics, however, is still treated mainly as a stand-alone subject and pupils do not have enough opportunities to refine their mathematical skills across the curriculum as a whole. Nonetheless, the IPC gives pupils a greater insight into national and global issues and helps them to see their place in the context of the wider world. Parents and carers are fulsome in their praise for this new innovation and comment that their children have a renewed interest in their lessons and 'can't wait to get to school now!' The curriculum has a good impact on pupils' personal development and supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It raises their confidence and self-esteem and helps them to understand the importance of respecting and supporting others. There is wide range of enrichment activities, which are highly regarded and very well supported by pupils. As they say, 'We have every kind of activity here!'

Pastoral care is a strength of the school and adults do their utmost to foster the emotional development of all the pupils in their charge. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive comprehensive support from teaching and learning assistants and achieve well as a result. Similarly, vulnerable pupils are identified rapidly and accurately and receive support tailored closely to their individual needs. Pupils play their part, too, and the 'friendship stop' is just one example to show just how much they care for their peers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The effectiveness of the leadership team in embedding ambition and driving improvement is satisfactory. The committed headteacher leads by example and members of the relatively new senior leadership team are beginning to identify areas for school development more accurately. They have engendered a strong sense of teamwork among staff, who say, 'Our school is a happy and supportive environment for all. We work well as a team with the children at the heart of everything we do.' Indeed, middle leaders value the opportunities they have to contribute to the school's self-evaluation and to offer their views on how the school can move forward. The governing body is fully supportive of everything the school is trying to do and governors visit the school regularly to take part in a variety of activities. They do not, however, challenge the leadership team with sufficient rigour to ensure ongoing improvement. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity, including the tackling of discrimination, is good overall and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those considered vulnerable are well catered for.

Child protection and safeguarding procedures are good and fully meet national guidelines. Parents and carers speak highly of how adults support and care for their offspring. There are effective links with a range of outside agencies, including local high schools, for the benefit of the pupils.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. The school has completed a clear analysis of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context. The IPC and related enrichment activities encourage pupils to engage with youngsters from different backgrounds and, as a result, they have a good understanding of religions and cultures which are different from their own.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2

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<p>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</p>	<p>3</p>
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Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers feel that the school keeps their sons and daughters safe and a very large majority are entirely satisfied with their children's experiences at Wellfield. Typical of many comments received are: 'Our children love school and are extremely happy and settled there. Their days are interesting and varied and their views are taken into account.' A very small minority of parents and carers are of the view that their children do not make enough progress because they are not challenged enough in class. Inspectors agree that expectations, particularly for more-able pupils, are not consistently high across the school and that this is one of the reasons why pupils' progress is satisfactory, overall. They judge, however, that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the comprehensive support they receive from teaching assistants and other support staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wellfield Junior 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 76 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 221 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	47	35	47	3	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	36	48	39	52	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	20	48	64	11	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	24	44	59	10	13	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	23	31	42	56	8	11	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	21	47	63	12	16	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	28	48	64	2	3	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)	20	27	39	52	9	12	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	27	41	55	10	13	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	25	44	59	8	11	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	12	52	69	8	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	20	44	59	10	13	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	33	40	53	8	11	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



26 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wellfield Junior School, Sale, M33 5QX

Thank you all for your lovely welcome when the inspection team visited your school recently. We are particularly grateful to those of you who came to talk to us on Wednesday lunchtime and to the small group of Year 6 girls who told us about the marvellous charity work they are leading. We thought your singing in the afternoon was excellent and some of us are still recovering from the 'Wake up, shake up!' session on Thursday morning! You were very keen to find out how the inspection had gone so I thought I would write to you to let you know.

Wellfield provides you with a satisfactory quality of education and it does a lot to help you develop your personal skills. Your behaviour is excellent and you do a lot to help your school and also the local and wider communities. You show that you enjoy school by your high attendance and impressive punctuality. Your singing and your art work are both very good indeed and your work displayed in classrooms and on the corridors demonstrates that you take a great pride in what you do. You enjoy the new International Primary Curriculum and you have many opportunities to take part in enrichment activities. Your teachers and other support staff take good care of you and make sure that you can take full advantage of what your school offers.

You make satisfactory progress in your work and your standards in English are always above average. Your standards in mathematics are improving but they are not as good as those in English. To help improve the school, I have asked your teachers to help you improve your skills in numeracy and I have also asked them to challenge you, particularly those of you who sometimes find the work easy, to reach the highest National Curriculum levels. I have mentioned, too, that it would be a good idea if your teachers and governors kept a sharper eye on how well the school is doing, so that they can make sure that Wellfield continues to improve.

Thank you once again for your contribution to the inspection. Please keep working hard, looking after each other and doing what you can to help those less fortunate than you are.

Yours sincerely

Jim Kidd

Lead Inspector

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