

Castleford Wheldon Infant School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108236
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	337041
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Eaton

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Baker
Headteacher	Mrs M Tricker
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2007
School address	Francis Street Castleford West Yorkshire WF10 1HF
Telephone number	01977 723070
Fax number	01977 723070
Email address	headteacher@wheldon.wakefield.sch.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documents such as written plans and policies, assessments of pupils' progress and safeguarding records. The inspectors received and analysed 38 parental/carer questionnaires.

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

- the quality of outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of steps taken to raise attainment in mathematics
- how well teaching meets the needs of all groups of pupils, especially the higher attainers
- the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation, particularly with regard to children's outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than average in size. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The large majority of pupils are White British. A smaller than average proportion has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a Nursery and a Reception class. The deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2009. The school has gained the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. Most children attend the Nursery for either mornings or afternoons. Registered childcare, managed by the governing body, enables up to 16 children to attend the Nursery each afternoon in addition to their morning sessions. In a typical year, over 10 per cent of children leave before the start of Reception and a similar percentage joins from other Nursery settings.

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 good school takes exceptionally effective care of its children. For example, there are extremely comprehensive and stringent arrangements for ensuring they are kept safe. Additionally, first-rate partnerships with a host of agencies and professionals enhance the school's work, particularly with its most vulnerable children. A consequence of features such as these is that children feel entirely safe in school. They have a remarkable awareness of situations that are potentially unsafe and understand why, for instance, wearing high-visibility tabards when walking to and from school will not be enough to keep them safe, but will be a great help. Children look out for each other and are always ready and willing to take on many and varied responsibilities, such as preparing the hall for assembly or putting out food and water for wild birds. They play an equally impressive part in the local community, recently receiving an award recognising their care for the environment.

Children make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage as do pupils in Years 1 and 2. As a result, their attainment overall and in writing and reading is above average by the end of Year 2. Attainment in mathematics is average. Pupils throughout the school find it hard to apply their numeracy skills to help them solve problems. In many ways, the curriculum meets children's needs very well. However, there is an abrupt change from the type of learning opportunities experienced in Reception, which focus heavily on children pursuing their interests and exploring resources, to the more formal Key Stage 1 curriculum. This means that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have relatively little opportunity to learn through play in order to help them extend their skills, for example, in numeracy, and gain confidence and competence in their use.

Carefully thought-out systems provide the school with accurate information which leaders use to tackle relative weaknesses. Monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching has led to a greater focus on the skills of multiplication and division in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Plans to bring about improvement are thorough and effective. As a result, the school is clearly moving forward. For instance, the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and pupils' skills in this key area have improved significantly since the previous inspection. All of this provides clear evidence of the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics to the same above average standards reached in reading and writing by:
 - focusing particularly on improving children's ability to apply their numeracy

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

skills to solving mathematical problems.

- Provide more opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 to practise and develop their skills by learning through structured play, making full use of the indoor and outdoor learning environment.

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

Pupils take a lively interest in lessons and learning. They are keen to answer teachers' questions, behave well and mostly listen carefully when other children are speaking. They particularly enjoy learning through practical tasks and they try hard to be independent. Year 1 pupils worked with immense care and concentration as they made toys, such as spinners and yo-yos, only asking for help when necessary. Although learning is good overall for all groups of pupils, there are occasions during some lessons when they do not learn as well as they could. For example, they do not all stay entirely focused when activities or explanations run on for too long. Pupils' mathematical skills are improving as the actions taken by the school begin to take effect. However, they still find mathematical problem-solving difficult, for example, when asked to find ways of comparing the length of objects.

Children's skills vary widely when they join the Nursery, but are often below the expectations for their age. Those who remain in school to the end of the Reception Year generally reach age-related expectations and they all continue to make good progress during Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, their good learning and progress together with above average attainment, other than in mathematics, mean that pupils' achievement is good. The good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is reflected in the high numbers of these children who reach the expected levels by the end of Year 2.

Pupils' good behaviour helps them to feel very safe in school. For example, because they are so considerate of others, they can all enjoy playtimes, whether joining in energetic games or chatting together as they draw and write in the covered area. Pupils understand that exercise is important for good health and by growing their own crops they learn to enjoy eating fresh fruit and vegetables. Attendance is above average and pupils understand the need to get to school on time. They appreciate that their education is important and pointed out to inspectors that it will enable them to 'go to college and then get a job'. Pupils' moral and social development is particularly good. They learn to play a full part in the school and wider community, for example, by helping each other during lessons, turning off lights and taps, and taking part in local projects such as planting bulbs to improve the environment.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons effectively, organising activities that capture pupils' interest. For example, during the inspection Year 2 pupils worked hard to write sentences for a fact sheet, after enjoying watching video clips and sharing a story about owls. Working relationships between adults and pupils are very good and this means that pupils are happy to tackle new work and contribute their ideas. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at asking questions that make pupils think more deeply and explain their answers. Just occasionally, opportunities to speed up learning are missed, for instance, when higher attaining pupils finish their tasks and do not know what to do next. Teachers make good use of assessment information to pitch work at the correct level. Marking is always encouraging but there are times when pupils are not helped to see how they could improve.

Aspects of the curriculum, such as a programme to develop social and emotional aspects of learning, filter through all areas of school life, adding to their effectiveness. A variety of relevant visits and visitors enriches learning opportunities very well. For example, exciting work led by artists in residence stimulates creativity and develops new skills. After-school activities are numerous, change regularly, involve parents and other local people, and are very much enjoyed by pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have few opportunities to learn by freely exploring resources, for example, within role-play areas such as the 'dentist's surgery' in the Reception classroom. Teachers are starting to enable pupils in Years 1 and 2 to learn through play outdoors during lessons, for instance, to encourage them to use mathematics in everyday situations, but this work is in the early stages.

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

The school works extremely hard and successfully to provide a warm and welcoming learning environment for all pupils. A superb balance is struck between vigilant care for pupils and encouraging them to accept some responsibility for their own health and safety. Pupils in Year 2 are taught how to respond in the event of an emergency. Staff work together very closely to provide excellent pastoral care. Pupils are entirely confident that any problems will be sorted out by the adults in school. Strong links with the junior school ensure that Year 2 pupils transfer smoothly. A programme of courses for parents is very well supported and offers guidance and opportunities for learning alongside their children.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's attention to detail and concern for every child are evident in all aspects of the school's work because she ensures that all staff share her high expectations. Teachers are involved well in the task of leading and improving teaching through a programme of 'partnership teaching' involving pairs of teachers observing each other. The outcomes of this work add to the information about the school's performance and feed into plans for further improvement and associated opportunities for professional development. The new deputy headteacher has just begun to contribute to monitoring and evaluation. Governors also play their part, including through 'Governors' Week' when they observe and support teachers during lessons. The school works hard to provide all pupils with equal opportunities. For example, the arrangements for admission to Reception have been changed to ensure that children with summer birthdays are not disadvantaged. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school reaches out extensively within its local area and pupils support a school in India, developing their awareness of life in a very different society. Safeguarding requirements are met exceptionally well. Policies and training ensure all staff and governors are thoroughly versed in every aspect and the school's partnerships with relevant agencies are excellent in ensuring that pupils receive the best possible care and support. The school regularly supports a number of colleges by providing placements for student teachers and childcare practitioners and shares training opportunities with other local schools.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress during the Nursery and Reception Years. At the end of Reception, they often score particularly well in the area of personal, social and emotional development, whereas children's calculation skills are comparatively weak. Close links with parents and careful induction arrangements mean that children settle in quickly and start learning right away. The staff successfully encourage children to be independent learners who choose and tackle activities with great confidence. They behave well and are sociable, playing together happily and constructively. Children thoroughly enjoy learning outside and using role-play areas imaginatively. The Nursery 'hairdresser's' was a hive of activity as girls and boys answered the phone, noted down appointments, and energetically attended to clients' hair. Groups working with adults, for example, when learning letter sounds, are taught well with good questioning and careful attention paid to recording how well children learn. The childcare arrangements are good with all the registration requirements met. Staff take great care to ensure these children have discrete learning opportunities during their afternoon sessions whilst working amid the company of other children. The staff work as a close-knit team, with leadership tasks often shared by the two teachers. They evaluate their work thoroughly and plan rigorously for further improvement. A current priority is to develop more resources for children to use when learning outdoors, particularly in the area of calculation. Leaders ensure that welfare requirements are fully met.

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

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

The questionnaires returned expressed very positive opinions of the school. All the parents and carers were happy with their child's experience at the school and felt they were kept safe. The inspection confirms that this is a good school. A couple of parents of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage felt that they had insufficient information about their children's progress. The inspectors judge that parents have good opportunities to find out how their children are getting on.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castleford Wheldon Infant School and Nursery 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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 187 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	57	15	43	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	63	13	37	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	40	19	54	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	57	14	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	57	15	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	54	15	43	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	63	12	34	0	0	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	57	13	37	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	49	18	51	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	31	22	63	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	29	22	63	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	51	15	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	66	12	34	0	0	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.



25 November 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Castleford Wheldon Infant School and Nursery, Castleford, WF10 1HF

Thank you for your friendly and polite welcome when the inspectors visited your school. We really enjoyed our short time with you. You told us how much you like your school and we agree with you. It is a good school.

These are some of the things that we thought were good:

- the school takes excellent care of you
- you feel very safe in school and know a great deal about how to stay safe
- we were very impressed to see that you do lots of jobs around school and you also help people in the local area and further away
- you learn well and make good progress, so the levels you reach are higher than in many other schools, especially in reading and writing.

We have asked the school to do two things to make it even better:

- help you to do as well in mathematics as you do in reading and writing
- give you more time to play during lessons, both indoors and outdoors.

Your headteacher and the staff work very hard to give you a good education. We send them and each one of you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Rosemary Eaton

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.