

Walliscote Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109120
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	337220
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	361
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Goodwin
Headteacher	Joanne Green
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Over half the time was spent looking at learning, including pupils' work; 18 lessons were observed and 16 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff, and brief discussions were held with some parents. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at local authority reports, information about pupils' progress, staff and pupil surveys and safeguarding procedures. The inspection team analysed 55 parent and carer questionnaires.

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

- progress and attainment of the different ethnic and ability groups and different age groups, especially in literacy and numeracy
- the consistency of teaching and use of assessment to raise attainment
- how effectively leadership drives and secures improvement to pupils' attainment.

Information about the school

Walliscote is larger than most primary schools. A large majority of pupils are White British, with a small minority from a wide range of other ethnic groups, particularly Eastern European. Nineteen different languages are spoken at the school and a larger-than-average proportion of pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, most being for behavioural or speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is also above average. The school has experienced a large turnover of pupils, with a high proportion in each year group joining during a key stage and not receiving the whole of their primary education at Walliscote. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes. The headteacher has been in post since January 2008 after a turbulent period, with two acting headteachers following the last inspection.

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

Walliscote Primary School ensures that pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory and that they do well in their personal development. The school is a happy, well-ordered community where pupils value and enjoy the interesting variety of backgrounds and languages spoken. The school engages well with parents, who are frequently welcomed to share in school activities. Pupils are very positive about school and appreciate the good and interesting curriculum and considerable care provided by staff, which helps them to feel safe. As one described, 'It isn't a small school, but it feels like one.' The good guidance and support is especially successful in helping those who experience personal or academic difficulties.

Attainment is low. Exceptionally high mobility of pupils throughout the year and the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are significant reasons why attainment is so low. Many who join the school late have experienced frequent disruptions to their learning. They settle quickly and make at least satisfactory progress, but this is often not fast enough to help them catch up. Nevertheless, the progress pupils currently make in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory and improving securely because of better teaching. Progress is satisfactory and improving for all groups of pupils. This includes those from all of the different ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who sometimes achieve more than their peers nationally. Where necessary, pupils are well supported to learn English and so soon begin to progress as well as others. Most pupils attend well, but a few take extended leave during term time, which also has a direct effect on their attainment.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and there is now a greater proportion of good teaching, recently resulting in improving progress in literacy and numeracy in several classes. Lessons are usually lively with motivating tasks where pupils are confident to contribute their views and explore problems for themselves. In most lessons, though, assessment is not used well enough in planning to ensure that all pupils are progressing fast enough. Too often, lessons lack sufficient challenge, particularly for the older or more able pupils in each group. Pupils have appropriate targets, but these do not relate to all lessons and do not change promptly enough after they have been achieved. As a result, teachers and pupils are not always sufficiently clear about what each pupil needs to do to reach the next steps in their learning. Expectations of how much progress each pupil can make, although improved, are sometimes not high enough.

The headteacher has been successful in beginning to improve the school in a number of ways. Monitoring and evaluation procedures have been enhanced to provide accurate information about the progress of different groups of pupils. Close monitoring has helped to improve teaching and increased pupils' progress. A broader management

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structure involves staff more fully in whole-school improvement. However, several leaders are new to their roles and some teams do not yet have a designated leader. In addition, not all roles are clearly defined in terms of responsibility and accountability for raising attainment, thus slowing the work of driving school improvement. Despite this, improvements already secured demonstrate that the capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

Pupils want to do well; they work hard and behave considerately, so that lessons run smoothly. Better behaviour is one of the most significant improvements brought about by a more creative curriculum, more interesting lessons, more structured playtimes and a new system for encouraging good behaviour. Pupils show much improved attitudes to taking on responsibility and they contribute well to the school and local community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment throughout the school by:
 - ensuring all lessons provide enough challenge for every pupil
 - raising teacher expectations of how quickly all pupils can learn
 - making parents and pupils fully aware of the links between attendance and attainment.
- Improve the use of assessment for helping individual pupils move more quickly to the next stage in their learning by:
 - providing easy-to-see steps in learning for each pupil in all literacy and numeracy lessons
 - ensuring that individual pupils move swiftly to the next step as soon as they are read
 - keeping pupils fully aware of these steps to enhance their understanding of exactly how they can move from one level to the next
 - using the information this provides to plan lesson activities that meet the needs of different groups of pupils
- Develop the skills of school leaders, at all levels, in driving improvement to academic outcomes by:
 - defining roles, responsibilities and accountability to focus more clearly on attainment and school improvement
 - ensuring that all key teams within school have a designated leader.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils clearly enjoy learning, showing a willingness to listen carefully and do their best. Although attainment is low the progress of all groups of pupils is satisfactory, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender or ability. Inspection evidence shows an increase in the rate of pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy over the last four terms. This has resulted from

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the improved assessment and some increased expectations in lessons. Consequently, achievement is satisfactory. For example, in one lesson, pupils worked well with partners to solve challenging money problems using decimals enthusiastically and accurately. Pupils with learning or speech and language difficulties can be seen thoroughly enjoying learning in booster classes as they learn more about reading or spelling, for example. Learning is equally satisfactory in science and most pupils show sound skills in using computers and other technology to find out about the world around them and practise their basic skills.

Improved behaviour not only leads to productive and more enjoyable lessons but incidents of bullying are now rare. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to lead healthy lives and many take more exercise and eat more fruit and vegetables as a result. Pupils’ skills in working together are developing well, not only in most lessons, but within the community, for example, in recently representing the school on a project to improve local road safety. This supports satisfactory preparation for their futures. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. One group, for example, was greatly inspired by the wonder of finding fossils, and most have a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils really appreciate the enrichment brought by those whose beliefs and lifestyles are different to their own.

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	4
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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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

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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The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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How effective is the provision?

Strengths within teaching include interesting and engaging activities, which pupils thoroughly enjoy, good encouragement of team work and very positive relationships where pupils are confident to take risks with learning. As one pupil explained, 'Teachers have a great sense of humour and are good at explaining things.' Enjoyment is enhanced by a much more engaging curriculum which has brought learning to life, with plenty of trips, visitors and themed weeks. There are good opportunities to increase pupils' knowledge of other cultures, for example, parents recently provided a slide show about Poland which captured pupils' imaginations well. There have been some improvements in the use of assessment and consequently expectations have risen. However, assessment is not yet used precisely enough to ensure that activities take learning forward at a fast enough rate for all pupils. For this reason expectations are still not consistently high enough and so learning is sometimes too slow for some. Good systems are in place to identify those requiring additional support, including the most vulnerable. Regular booster groups are effective for low-ability pupils and those with speech and language or learning difficulties, and are appreciated by the more able, who feel they help them to progress at a faster rate. This accounts for some of the more recently improved progress. Pupils really value the help their targets give them but there are many literacy and numeracy lessons where they do not apply or the targets themselves do not change often enough. Strong care and guidance have ensured that not only behaviour but also attendance has improved, which is supporting better outcomes for pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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 headteacher has provided good leadership in improving many aspects of the way the school works. Most importantly, with senior staff and with the support of governors, she has developed a high quality and effective system for regularly monitoring and evaluating the progress for different groups of pupils. This has been used well to bring staff together as a team, increase ambition and encourage a shared responsibility for outcomes. Alongside the significantly improved behaviour, this is the single most

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important reason for the evident rise in expectations. Recent steps also have begun to reduce late entrants to the school. The impact of these initiatives is only just beginning to show in the results, because a legacy of underachievement and the high mobility has slowed this work. Nevertheless, teaching and pupils’ learning are clearly improving. Despite this good work, not all school leaders are held sufficiently accountable for their role in driving improvement. With unavoidable long-term absence within the senior staff team, several staff have taken on increased responsibility and are only just developing the necessary skills. This broader structure is not yet complete and some teams still lack a designated leader to further support the drive for improvement.

The school takes considerable care to ensure that opportunities are equally provided for all pupils and results show that there is no discrimination. Safeguarding procedures are robust, are carefully overseen by governors and are regularly reviewed. Community cohesion is promoted to a satisfactory degree and is particularly effective within the school, with parents and locally, and evaluation shows that relationships have improved significantly in the last year and are now very positive.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly in Reception because of the warm relationships and good liaison with parents and pre-school providers. A strong emphasis is placed on developing children’s personal skills, such as working well with others and being more independent and as a result they make good progress in this area. From very low attainment on entry, children make satisfactory progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills,

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although by the time children join Year 1, skills in literacy and numeracy remain well below average levels. Children are happy and well behaved and there is a buzz of excited activity as children choose from an array of activities such as building towers, searching for buried treasure, writing letters or counting on 'one more' puppet. Teaching is satisfactory, although during teacher-led sessions children are occasionally expected to sit for too long rather than actively explore their ideas with their teacher. Where children are finding out things for themselves, teaching is often good as they generally receive skilled support and demonstrate very good skills in helping each other and getting along well. Satisfactory leadership is shared between two teachers, but lacks focused direction for more rapid improvement by not having a single, dedicated leader. The outside area is used regularly and enjoyed by the children, although it is not yet fully developed to encourage even more fruitful exploration by children of their environment. Staff have worked effectively as a team to develop improved, more accurate assessment for tracking children's progress, which gives them an accurate view of strengths and areas for development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school. They particularly appreciate how much their children enjoy school and how safe they are. Parents are pleased with the quality of teaching and leadership. They also like the curriculum; as one explained, 'Walliscote is brilliant at finding creative ways of bringing the curriculum alive, to ensure enjoyment of our children's learning.' Of the very few concerns that were expressed, these largely related to progress and behaviour. The inspection evaluated learning and progress as satisfactory and behaviour as good; the findings regarding these aspects are addressed within the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Walliscote Primary 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 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 279 pupils registered at the school but this represents a smaller number of families.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	49	27	49	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	45	29	53	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	36	34	62	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	42	27	49	4	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	45	30	55	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	36	31	56	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	35	34	62	1	2	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)	22	40	27	49	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	40	30	55	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	42	26	47	4	7	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	36	33	60	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	49	27	49	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	42	31	56	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.



18 March 2010]

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walliscote Primary School, Weston-super-Mare BS23 1UY

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons. Your school is a satisfactory and improving school, with many interesting things going on, just as you described. Senior staff work hard to keep developing the school and this is an important reason why your work is getting better each year.

Enjoyable teaching helps you to make satisfactory progress in your lessons and your work is improving. As a result the rate of your progress over time is increasing. We like the way you really enjoy your lessons and always try to do your best. The attainment levels you reach, though, are still low by the time you leave the school. For this reason we have asked your school to raise attainment for all of you, and improve the way your targets are set and used, by:

- giving you an easy-to-understand, clear set of steps towards reaching the next level in your work, which are changed as soon as they are reached and help you in all English and mathematics lessons
- making sure all lessons help each one of you to work at a level which challenges you and helps you to make more progress
- showing you how good attendance is linked to good attainment.

We would also like school leaders to improve the way they work to improve progress and attainment. We are sure that you will discuss these ideas with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your ideas.

The responsibilities that you take on are heartening, for example, the way some of you lead activities at lunchtime and have worked with the local community to improve road safety. You were keen to tell us that the school keeps you safe and looks after you well. It is therefore very pleasing to see that you are helping yourselves by behaving well and considering others in lessons and on the playground. You show good respect and understanding towards those who have different beliefs and ways of living, which helps make your school a happy and welcoming community.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Potheary

Lead inspector

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