

# William Austin Infants' School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109584
<b>Local Authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	337324
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Wynford-Jones

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	449
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Stan Boelman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lynn Alexander
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Culverhouse Road Luton LU3 1PZ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors visited an assembly, 19 lessons and observed 15 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school improvement plan. Inspectors analysed 142 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

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

- the achievement of more able pupils
- pupils' progress in mathematics
- the use of the outdoor area to promote children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

William Austin Infant is larger than most infant schools. Almost all of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Most are of Asian or British Asian heritage. Nearly all speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly similar to the national average. However, the percentage of pupils holding a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning or speech, language and communication difficulties.

The school holds the Healthy School status and has gained the Investors in People and the sports Activemark awards.

The school shares the site with Greenside Children's Centre and William Austin Junior School. They were not inspected as part of this 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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

This is a good school. It serves the needs of the pupils and the local community well. It is popular and over-subscribed. The school's success can be attributed to the enthusiasm, drive and vision of the headteacher, senior leaders and the effective governing body. The work of the school and pupils' progress are closely monitored and analysed rigorously. Strategies are quickly put in place to enhance pupils' learning and to ensure that any gaps in performance between groups are eliminated. The level of care, guidance and support, especially for the most vulnerable pupils is exemplary. This enables all pupils to be fully involved in the life of the school.

Pupils' achievement is good. From a below average starting point on entry to the Reception classes, children make good progress. They enter Year 1 with skills, knowledge and understanding that are marginally below those seen nationally. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, although within the broadly average banding, is marginally higher than the national average. Results show a rising trend over the last three years. Pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to continue the upward trend in reading, writing and mathematics, with a greater proportion of pupils likely to attain the higher levels. This reflects the impact of the school's work in challenging the more able pupils.

Pupils make good progress because teaching is good and the curriculum is well matched to their needs. The curriculum promotes pupils' academic learning and their personal development effectively. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy living. Their outstanding awareness of healthy eating and eagerness to take part in sporting activities have contributed to the school's being awarded the Healthy School status and the sports Activemark award.

Within an overall profile of good teaching, the large majority of lessons are taught well. Some are taught extremely well and are outstanding. In contrast, others are satisfactory. The main difference is that in the satisfactory lessons, pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning. Much of the learning in these lessons is directed by the teacher. Pupils are not challenged sufficiently through the use of open-ended questions or provided with sufficient opportunities to follow up their own ideas and to find things out for themselves.

The school's capacity for further improvement is good. The school's self evaluation of its own performance is detailed and accurate. The strengths and areas for development have been clearly identified in the very comprehensive and detailed school development plan. Staff are supportive and contribute effectively to school development. There is a culture of continuing staff professional development. This has contributed to the school

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gaining the Investors in People Award. The senior leadership team and the governing body have rightly identified that outdoor provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage does not currently reflect the good practice seen within the classrooms. A good start has been made on providing equipment to promote the children's physical development but provision to enhance children' learning across the remaining early learning goals has yet to be firmly established.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Provide children in the Early Years Foundation Stage with more opportunities to use the outdoor area to develop their learning.
- Ensure pupils take more responsibility for their own learning by building on and sharing effective teaching strategies.

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

Pupils are polite, enjoy school and behave well. At times their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils interact well with each other and are keen to take responsibility. Their contribution to the school and local community is good. They want to help each other and to see their school do well. They are developing a good understanding of other faiths, customs, values and beliefs. Incidents of unkind or racist behaviour are rare. Pupils have a good understanding of personal safety. Some Year 2 pupils checked the identity of the inspector before entering into conversation.

The large majority of pupils attend regularly but a few do not attend as frequently as they should. This is despite the extensive efforts of the school and the robust procedures that are in place. Too many pupils continue to take extended holidays in term time. As a result, the school has to provide additional support to ensure these pupils make progress similar to their peers. Although pupils' attendance is satisfactory, their preparation for the next stage in their lives is good. This is because transfer arrangements to the junior school are firmly embedded; pupils have a positive attitude to learning and their attainment in the core subjects and in information and communication technology is marginally higher than the national average.

In lessons pupils are attentive. They work with sustained concentration and are keen to do well. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson they developed their skills well. They used computers effectively to develop their understanding of number and to create lists and tables. Initially the large majority found the task difficult but with good support from the teacher and support staff, they were able successfully to accomplish the task and explain what they had done.

Scrutiny of pupils' exercise books confirms that the vast majority are making good progress in English and in mathematics. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the technicalities in writing, for example the use of punctuation and capital letters. However, their work tends to be limited by the restricted use of vocabulary and their understanding of subject specific terminology. Pupils speak highly of their teachers and support staff. They say that the work is enjoyable and often it is hard; they like the topic

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work but would like more time to find things out for themselves.

There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls or between the different ethnic groups. The more able pupils are challenged appropriately. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the individual support provided.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

The exemplary level of care, guidance and support enables all pupils to be fully involved in the school. The support for the most vulnerable pupils is particularly effective. Well established links and partnerships with outside agencies and the strong links with parents are contributing to accelerating the rate of pupils' progress. Systems to ensure the safety and well-being of the pupils are firmly in place. There are extensive opportunities for parents to develop their understanding of the curriculum and how they can support their children's learning. These are appreciated by parents. One parent wrote, 'My child and I have benefited from the school. I am really impressed with how the school interacts with the parents and how we are given opportunities to join in and

<sup>1</sup> 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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learn.'

A key feature of the curriculum is the joint approach by staff. Teachers in the different year groups plan together effectively and ensure that pupils in parallel classes have equality of opportunity of access to the curriculum. The curriculum is based on a topic approach. The themes have been thought through well to ensure coverage of National Curriculum requirements and to meet the needs of the pupils. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to explore issues for themselves. There is a strong focus on promoting the basic skills and in consolidating these skills in other lessons. In Year 2, pupils are placed into sets for literacy and numeracy. The school's assessment record shows that this is effective in ensuring that all pupils make good progress. Good quality displays reflect the stimulating curriculum and the emphasis placed on celebrating pupils' work. Good use is made of visits and of visitors to the school to promote learning. Pupils are keen to take part in the good range of extra-curricular activities, which contribute to their personal development.

In the large majority of lessons, teaching ensures that the pace of learning is brisk. Lesson content is presented in a way that captures the interests of the pupils. Lessons are interactive: effective use is made of questioning strategies and information and communication technology is used well to support learning. Teaching assistants work effectively alongside the class teacher and provide good support to pupils who find learning difficult or those who are in the early stages of learning English. Pupils know their literacy and numeracy targets. The large majority understand what they have to do next to improve. They are increasingly being asked to evaluate their own learning and their peers' work. However, there remains some inconsistency between classes in this.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress and to hold staff to account. Senior leaders and middle managers consistently communicate high expectations and work well with staff to enhance provision and to accelerate pupils' progress. Good support is offered to staff new to the school. Governors take their roles and responsibilities seriously. They set suitably challenging targets and work effectively with the school. They ensure that the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures are thorough and implemented consistently. The school's contribution to promoting community cohesion is good. The governors, headteacher and staff know the

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school community well and have done much to promote the school locally. There are links with other schools in the United Kingdom and in other countries but these have yet to be fully exploited. Nevertheless, pupils are developing their understanding and appreciation of other cultures well and show respect for each other. Staff and governors promote equality of opportunity effectively. They welcome pupils to the school and ensure that all are included, so that there is no discrimination. Through the careful monitoring of pupils' performance senior staff have identified areas for further improvements where slight variations between groups remain. Good strategies to close the gap are in place. The school development plan is monitored methodically. However, the measures by which it is to be evaluated are not sufficiently precise.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Effective induction procedures, underpinned by good links with the on-site children's centre and supportive relationships with parents, ensure children settle quickly, grow in confidence, behave well and quickly develop a positive attitude to learning.

Staff work together effectively and use their good understanding of how young children learn to plan a good range of stimulating activities that maintain their interests. The emphasis placed on ensuring the children's welfare enables all children to experiment and explore within a safe and supportive environment. Classrooms are well organised and vibrant. Children engage with staff and visitors and are keen to talk about their work and play. Children's work is celebrated and displayed effectively. The classrooms are well equipped and there is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated



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activities. However, the use of the outdoor area as a natural extension of the classroom is still at a relatively early stage of development. This has been recognised by the school. Plans are in place to enhance provision and opportunities for learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. She coordinates the team well, provides clear guidance and offers constructive suggestions to enhance the children's learning. Systems for assessing and recording children's attainment are firmly established and used effectively to evaluate the curriculum and to inform future planning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 vast majority of the responses from parents and carers were entirely supportive of the school's work. Their positive views are confirmed by inspection evidence. A particularly high percentage of parents and carers stated that the school is well led and managed, teaching is good, their children feel safe and enjoy school. A few parents and carers felt that the school did not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors found that links with parents are good. The school welcomes parental comments. In some cases, it was not able to take up the suggestions because of the wider implications.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at William Austin Infants' 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 142 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 449 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	54	63	44	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	73	51	66	46	3	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	65	46	74	52	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	35	86	61	5	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	73	51	67	47	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	67	47	68	48	3	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	35	86	61	4	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)	46	32	85	60	3	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	35	84	59	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	38	80	56	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	34	78	55	9	6	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	69	49	69	49	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	74	52	66	46	1	1	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

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



13 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of William Austin Infants' School, Luton, LU3 1PZ

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit and talking to you.

Your school provides you with a good education. The staff really care about you and want you to do well. They teach you effectively and offer you excellent care, guidance and support. This helps you make good progress. By the end of Year 2, your attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is slightly higher than the national average. We found that you have an excellent understanding of healthy living and know a lot about being safe. You show respect for others and behave well.

You get off to a good start in the Reception classes. In your classrooms you have some really good activities. The inspectors want you to be able to do these things outdoors as well and suggested to your teachers that they look carefully at the way the outdoor area is used. At the moment, it is used well for you to run about, climb, ride bikes and play different games. We want you to have areas where you can paint, make music, read, write and practise your number work amongst other things.

In Years 1 and 2 you continue to make good progress. Your teachers have got a lot of good ideas about how to help you to make even better progress. We have asked them to share these ideas, but most of all to give you more opportunities to find things out for yourselves. This can be really exciting for you, especially when you are looking things up for your topics, which many of you said you enjoyed doing.

We were pleased when you told us that you like school. From the registers we see that most of you attend regularly. We were very sorry to see that some of you do not attend as often as you should and too many of you take long holidays in term time. Please remember, to make your school better you must also play your part by always attending. Good luck for the future and remember to keep working hard.

Yours sincerely

David Wynford-Jones

Lead inspector

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