

Wootton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121875
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	340033
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Miller

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	403
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Fenlon-Smith
Headteacher	Lorraine Schofield
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2006
School address	Farmclose Road Wootton Northampton
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Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2010
Inspection number	340033

Registered childcare provision	Wootton After School Club
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	38
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	Not previously inspected

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The majority of inspectors' time was spent observing lessons and looking at pupils' learning. They observed 30 lessons, and 16 teachers were seen. Inspectors also undertook other general observations including displays of the pupils' work. They held meetings with the governors, staff, the school council and talked informally with other pupils, as well as meeting with parents and carers at the start of the school day. They looked at documentation including policies, development planning and self-evaluation, monitoring files, curriculum and safeguarding documents. They examined minutes of governing body meetings, the headteacher's reports to the governing body, local authority reports on the school and information provided for parents and carers. Inspectors received and analysed questionnaires from 160 parents and carers, 105 pupils and 42 members of staff. They visited the after-school club, held discussions with its staff and examined its documentation.

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

- the impact of the school's approach to ensuring different groups of pupils are enabled to achieve equally well and make good progress
- the work the school is doing to ensure equally high standards in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6
- the school's initiatives to raise the quality of pupils' learning from good to outstanding.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized school. It serves a diverse, rapidly growing community from a number of villages and new housing estates. It has gained 5 new classes since its previous inspection. A much higher than average percentage of pupils joins the school during the course of any academic year. The proportion of girls at the school is currently below average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, the large majority having moderate learning difficulties. However, the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school currently holds National Healthy Schools Status, Investors in People, and Activemark for physical education.

The school governors operate an after-school club for pupils aged four to eleven, as part of the school's extended services to its community. In addition, privately run child care, for children aged from four to eleven, is provided on the premises each school day from 7.45 to 8.45 am by the Bright Eyes Breakfast Club. A privately run play scheme for four to fourteen year olds, Happy Hols, operates from the premises during school holidays. The privately run provision is inspected and reported on separately by Ofsted.

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

1

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils start in Reception with attainment broadly in line with expectations and make good progress to leave at the end of Year 6 with above average attainment in national tests. The achievements of pupils are good. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the high quality of teamwork at the school continues to strengthen. The school has established firmly a good track record of academic success, and ensured good improvement since the last inspection. Its focus and ambition on behalf of its pupils in raising the quality of their learning is relentless. Its capacity to secure and maintain continued improvement is impressive.

The school's self-evaluation is rigorous. Its improvement planning focuses firmly on pupils' learning, and those aspects designed to aid staff in their determination to make this good school outstanding. School development planning is able therefore to concentrate on the fine tuning of established strengths rather than the resolution of any major weaknesses. There is established good practice relating to assessment and marking, a focus on the development of pupils' writing skills, and in planning to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils. However, some inconsistencies remain in these practices across the school. The current focus for the school's own lesson observations centres on resolving these inconsistencies, in order to improve further pupils' learning and progress. These initiatives are linked securely to teachers' own professional development and the sharpening of day-to-day lesson planning to ensure what is taught is modified increasingly to meet individual pupils' needs, and particularly those of the more able pupils.

The school has much to celebrate. It has developed and established an outstanding curriculum where innovative and creative approaches enable pupils to see and experience learning 'outside the box'. Pupils are enabled to apply their knowledge and skills across subject boundaries; consequently, their learning and understanding are made more relevant. Pupils enjoy their time at school, and this is reflected in high attendance levels. There is a strong sense of community within the school, and pupils' personal development and sense of social responsibility are significant strengths. Pupils are supported in this by unobtrusive but excellent pastoral support. Working relationships between staff and pupils are very good, and contribute significantly to pupils' positive approaches to learning. The school's engagement with pupils and their families, and the ways it promotes pupils' well-being are excellent. As one parent wrote: 'The school has high expectations of its pupils, and has put into place many methods to make these a reality. The pupils thrive and flourish in the Wootton School environment.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise further pupils' achievement and attainment by:
 - ensuring a consistent approach to assessment and marking which makes clear to pupils the next steps in their learning
 - optimising opportunities across the curriculum for the development of pupils' writing skills
 - challenging more consistently the higher attaining pupils through different learning activities and alternative starting points for them in lessons.

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

Academic success is underpinned well by the pupils' development and practical application of thinking skills. This often leads to creative and imaginative approaches, when exploring mathematical problems and discussing literature. Pupils apply similarly thoughtful and considered critical and analytical techniques whether exploring historical source material or the works of major artists. Pupils not only appreciate what they know, but also understand what they need to discover, how to solve problems and evaluate what they have learnt. When asked by an inspector to explain what they were doing during one lesson observation, a group of pupils replied, 'We're learning!' They were able to explain what they were learning, and why.

Tests and teacher assessments in English, mathematics and science show pupils' attainments are just above average by the end of Year 2 and securely above by Year 6. Recent success in the Year 6 national tests have brought standards close to well above average in English. Having being given increasing opportunities to develop their writing skills across the curriculum, this has still to impact in terms of sustaining improvements to standards in writing.

Pupils of all abilities make good progress in lessons, and school tracking confirms good progress across the range of year groups. The attainment of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above that of similar groups nationally. This is because the school has established a very effective tracking system which is used systematically to set challenging targets and prevent potential underachievement. The attainment of the above average proportion of pupils who join the school each year is assessed quickly, and individual support provided where necessary. A recent national 'One to One Tuition' survey visit recognised the effective learning techniques seen during the inspection and which support pupils' good progress. Furthermore, the school has received acclaim from the local authority for the progress of pupils with visual impairment. Cultural diversity means there are nineteen different languages spoken at the school, and support for those pupils for whom English is an additional language enables them to make good progress.

The wide social mix within the school makes an excellent contribution to pupils' understanding of their own and other's cultures and beliefs. Pupils' social awareness is high, as is their understanding of their responsibility to their community. Attitudes are often excellent in lessons. There are a few pupils who find the management of their own

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behaviour difficult, and this very occasionally affects learning. However, behaviour around the school is good, and pupils show a responsible approach to keeping each other safe. Pupils' views are taken into account both by their teachers and the governing body, and this makes an important contribution to their understanding of their role as future citizens.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	2
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The school's whole ethos and approach, is centred firmly on enabling and supporting learning. Almost all parents agreed that teaching at the school is good, and the needs of their children are met well. As one parent wrote, 'Teachers manage to balance all areas of learning, and go the extra mile to ensure motivation is maintained.' Consistently good teaching underpins securely the school's philosophy, and ensures a productive partnership in learning between pupils and their teachers. Where outstanding teaching was seen, there was excellent challenge of individual pupils to explain their thinking, and to share and discuss their ideas. There is good support by skilled teaching assistants for those who find learning more difficult. Regular and accurate assessment of pupils' work,

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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and oral feedback to pupils, helps them to understand how to improve. However, this is not reinforced consistently through written comments in pupils' books. The planning of lessons is mainly very good, but does not always include a specific enough focus on higher attaining pupils.

The school has considered very carefully the needs of its pupils and the key skills, knowledge and expertise they need for success in later life. This has led to excellence in its curriculum. The use and application of thinking skills, and the links teachers help pupils to make between subjects are major strengths. The school's curriculum engages pupils very successfully and provides enjoyment in learning. What is taught each term is publicised on the school's website, and includes guidance as to how families may play their part in reinforcing learning. The specialist Spanish teaching, supported by a native speaker from a partner school, is of particular note. There is an extensive range of extra-curricular provision, both at lunchtime and after school, and provision at the after school club is good. Visits and visitors enhance the curriculum very well.

Provision is underpinned by the outstanding guidance, care and support for pupils. Pastoral care is particularly strong, and the ways the school involves families in ensuring their children are able to succeed is excellent. The school works very hard to involve parents and carers in identifying support for those pupils who need it and in ensuring all are able to succeed. Consequently, pupils' individual needs are met through a wide variety of programmes, and access to external support agencies. Inspectors agree with the very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire that careful monitoring ensures any concerns are resolved quickly.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

There is strength in the depth of the quality of leadership and management of the school. Leaders at all levels demonstrate strong individuality, principled personal qualities and complementary professional skills. This is a significant factor in the school's success. A further strength is that leaders know precisely what to do to secure improvement. The high quality of teamwork and rigorous self-evaluation is evident from middle leaders through the senior leadership team to the school's governors. Their common ambition to become an outstanding school is driven by a firm belief that they must provide the very best opportunities for the pupils. This is a strong thread running through the whole of the school's life and work, and contributes, in no small measure, to

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the school's excellent capacity for improvement.

The school works hard to ensure equality of opportunity for all its pupils. In looking to ensure that higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged, the school has recognised the need to sharpen its approach to lesson planning. Whilst the monitoring of teaching and learning is excellent on the part of senior leadership, some middle leaders are still developing this craft. Many of the school's governors are new to their posts, but have undertaken training and forged strong and active links with the school. Discussions with governors show they are carrying out their monitoring role well; however, this is not always reflected clearly enough in governing body minutes. Systems for safeguarding pupils are secure, and exemplary in some respects, such as procedures for protecting potentially vulnerable pupils. The school has carried out an extensive audit of its contribution to community cohesion. Its subsequent action plan is linked securely to curriculum development and initiatives from local to international contexts. This is enabling pupils to develop very well the essential skills they need as future citizens.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved from being satisfactory at the last inspection to good. School data show that attainment has been rising gradually over the last three years. Attainment on entry is usually broadly in line with expectations. However, the current Reception children joined the school with overall levels of attainment below the expectations for their age. They have made good progress and the large majority are already achieving standards close to expectations; a

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minority are on track to exceed these. There are particular strengths in the children's personal development. Children clearly enjoy their time in the Reception classes, and are very keen to learn. Provision is enhanced further through the good opportunities available for younger children through the after-school club.

Both Reception teachers were new to their posts this academic year, and are both good leaders and managers. They operate very effectively as a team and are building well on previous good practice and experience. Their assessment of children's individual needs and abilities is a particular strength. There are some excellent initiatives, such as the contributions families make to their children's learning journals. Further links with families have been planned to involve home visits to enhance the transition of children from pre-school settings to Reception.

Planning is good. Activities and daily themes are related well to the individual children's stages of development. There is a good balance, throughout the day, of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Inside and outside areas are used very effectively. The whole Reception area is resourced well, but the outside area lacks a special surface to enable the use of larger climbing equipment. Nevertheless, there are plenty of opportunities for healthy exercise. The setting provides children with a wide variety of interesting opportunities for learning. This ranges from formal literacy work, when writing invitations to a dinosaur party, and the creative construction of bridges for a T-Rex to walk across, to exploring worms when digging in the vegetable plot. Children are polite, communicative, curious, cooperative, self-confident, motivated and prepared well for their future work in the main school.

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 high levels of satisfaction with the school are reflected in the informal discussions inspectors held with parents and carers at the start of the school day. Responses to questionnaires point to excellent working relationships and the approachability of the school. As one parent put it, 'This is an awesome school, and my children love it.' There is some concern about preparation of their children for the future. However, this is related not to the school's provision, but to issues concerning the allocation of secondary school places to pupils in Year 6. The school itself prepares pupils very well for their next stage of education and future lives. A few parents mentioned the behaviour of a very few disruptive pupils, but this was more than balanced by those who commented

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on the success of the school's approach to behaviour management. Inspection evidence confirms the views expressed by the very large majority of parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wootton 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 160 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 403 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	100	63	55	34	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	104	65	54	34	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	69	43	85	53	5	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	42	86	54	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	80	50	79	49	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	44	83	52	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	66	41	89	56	5	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)	69	43	71	44	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	77	48	74	46	6	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	69	43	78	49	8	5	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	59	37	91	57	5	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	99	62	55	34	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	101	63	56	35	3	2	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 Wootton Primary School, Wootton, NN4 6HJ.

Just outside the main entrance to your school is a mural which says, 'Wootton's all about friendship.' We know this is true from the warm welcome you gave to us during the inspection. Just inside the main entrance to your school is a display which states, 'At Wootton everybody is on a life long journey of learning to think and thinking to learn.' We would like to thank you for the ways in which you helped us to understand why you learn well, and why yours is such a good school.

These are some of the things about your school we were impressed with.

Your attendance at school is high, and you enjoy your learning.

Your teachers help and support you well in your learning.

You make a good start to your education in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

You have made good progress by the time you leave at the end of year 6.

The school helps you to grow and develop very well indeed as young people.

You are prepared very well for secondary school and later life.

You make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community.

Your teachers, and other adults at the school, take very good care of you.

Staff at your school work very well with your families to help you learn.

Your headteacher and other senior teachers lead your school very well.

Your teachers are always looking for ways in which they can help you to learn and achieve better. We have asked them to do three things. First, to reinforce the good help and advice they give you in class through the comments and targets they write when marking your work. Secondly, to give you more opportunities to practise the writing skills you learn in English lessons through work in other subjects. Finally, to plan work which will challenge even further those of you who are more able.

Another of the murals you created has the words, 'We value knowledge. We love thinking skills. We value cooperation.' Please continue to practise these important ideals as you continue your life long journey of learning.

With all best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Miller

Lead inspector

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