

Windsor Park CofE (C) Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124451
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	340575
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Mark Sims HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	484
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carolyn Hollins
Headteacher	Chris James
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited parts of 25 lessons and saw 23 teachers. They had discussions with governors, staff and groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at its priorities and policies, analysed recent national test results and school data on pupils' progress, scrutinised child protection and safeguarding documents, read pupils' and staff surveys and analysed 116 parental questionnaires.

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

- the extent of pupils' progress at Key Stages 2 and 3 in English and mathematics
- the provision for different groups of learners, particularly the performance of girls and higher-attaining pupils
- how well teachers plan for the needs of pupils at risk of being vulnerable, particularly for those who are learning English as an additional language or have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the impact of senior leaders in bringing about improvements to teaching, learning and achievement
- how well pupils are prepared for life in a culturally diverse society.

Information about the school

Windsor Park is small when compared to the average-sized secondary school. The school is situated in the diocese of Lichfield. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is low, as is the percentage with statements. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds of whom very few are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. Windsor Park has achieved Healthy School status and the International Schools award.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the quality of pupils' learning and their progress, particularly of low-attainers and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the quality of teaching, particularly in the use of assessment to support learning.

There is a calm and peaceful atmosphere in and around the school, typified by the overwhelming view of parents and carers and pupils alike that the school does an outstanding job in keeping its learners safe, secure and well looked after. Pupils behave well in and around school. They get on well together in lessons and provide mutual support as peer counsellors. Pupils work well with those from different backgrounds. Those learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities integrate well in lessons. Despite the lack of diversity in the school population, pupils have a secure knowledge of other religions and cultures. They have a good understanding of right and wrong. There are good links with parents and carers, the large majority of whom have a positive view of the school. The level of pupils' attendance is above average and improving.

Pupils join the school at the start of Year 5 having reached a level of attainment in English, mathematics and science that is broadly typical of the age group nationally. By the time they leave at the end of Year 8, the school's assessment information and work seen in lessons indicate that they have maintained nationally typical levels of attainment in these three subjects. Progress across Key Stages 2 and 3 is inadequate, however, because of its excessive variability across pupils' performances. Results fell compared to previous years in the most recent national tests at Key Stage 2. The school's data show wide variations between teaching groups and across subjects. While high-attaining pupils make good progress, lower attainers and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make sufficient progress. Work in classes of lower ability is not always challenging enough and teachers make insufficient use of pupils' individual education plans. In the most recent national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, boys did better than girls, which is a reverse of the trend nationally.

While most of the lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory and sometimes good, teaching overall is inadequate because lower-attaining pupils do not make sufficient progress and there is inadequate preparation for the needs of different groups of learners in lesson planning. Because pupils are grouped in classes of similar ability, too often teachers provide one task for all. Marking does not sufficiently inform pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. The curriculum

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offers a wide range of courses for pupils but there is no provision for drama. Many parents and carers commented positively about extra-curricular and enrichment activities. One parent summed up the views of many saying, 'My child has been given many opportunities to try out new activities in school time and after school.' Care is strong for pupils and the house system of mixed-age tutor groups ensures pupils receive effective guidance from staff and older pupils. However, support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in lessons did not feature sufficiently in teachers' planning. While the school provides pupils learning English as an additional language with resources in their first language, they lack the support and knowledge to enable them to acquire English as rapidly as they should.

The school has satisfactory capacity to improve because leaders have worked closely with the local authority to establish a school improvement group through which training and closer monitoring is bringing about improvements to teaching. The school has successfully raised the progress of high-attaining pupils. A system has been developed to track pupils in each teaching group and leaders have pinpointed accurately where shortcomings exist. Targets for pupils in the lowest sets are not sufficiently challenging. Action has already been taken to strengthen the leadership team to ensure greater accountability for subject leaders and teachers, but many of these changes will not take effect until the next academic year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress pupils make, particularly that of lower attainers and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, by ensuring appropriately challenging work is set and that individual education plans are used more effectively.
 - Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring assessment information is used more effectively in lesson planning, and marking consistently informs pupils how they can improve their work.
 - Ensure that managers and teachers use assessment data more effectively to set appropriately challenging targets for different groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Pupils make variable progress in their learning and progress in lessons because of inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Pupils in classes of higher ability in mathematics make good progress, but the progress of those of lower ability is inadequate as they are insufficiently challenged. Middle-to lower-ability pupils in English make insufficient progress where there has been disruption in staffing. By contrast, those in the lowest-ability groups have made the expected level of progress because of a targeted literacy programme.

Pupils enjoy their learning, particularly where teaching is good and where they can take part in practical activities, particularly in science. Pupils make better progress when they are given the opportunity to explore ideas with a partner or in small groups, but where lessons lack pace and interest older pupils occasionally become restless. Pupils are confident that bullying is dealt with effectively. Peer counsellors contribute significantly to school life, ensuring bullying is rare. They are well trained for their role. Most pupils are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles. The school council plays an important part in

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school life and sports leaders contribute to sporting achievements of their peers. Pupils play a part in the local community through litter collection and singing to senior citizens and have worked with local police to produce a video on reducing crime. The preparation for the next steps in their future is satisfactory. Pupils support the parish church's fund raising and participate in the Eucharist each term.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
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	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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and they present learning objectives clearly so that pupils know what is expected of them. Too often the objectives are not specific enough for different groups. Activities are usually well sequenced but there is an over-dependence on worksheets, which are often unfinished and unmarked. At times, teachers accept brief responses to their questions and miss opportunities to challenge pupils to think things through for themselves. Assessment is not always used effectively in lesson planning to meet the needs of different groups of learners or to provide appropriate challenge. Consequently, tasks are often too easy or too difficult for pupils' range of abilities. Assessment data are not used effectively enough to set appropriately challenging targets, particularly for low-attaining pupils.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. There is no separate provision for drama, but pupils, parents and carers commented favourably about the extensive range of extra-curricular activities on offer, as well as special events such as 'bike day' and 'reading

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week'. There is good additional curriculum provision for high-attaining pupils in Key Stage 2, but individual low-attainers miss out on lessons, such as music, to receive additional literacy support. Grouping pupils by ability enables lower-attaining pupils to receive additional support in smaller groups, but the provision varies too much between subjects. There is not enough use made of information and communication technology (ICT) by pupils to support their learning.

There is good support for the emotional development of pupils through specific lunchtime sessions. Pupils also contribute to this by acting as peer counsellors for each other. The school works closely with external agencies, for example, the school nurse, to ensure the health and safety of pupils. While pupils at risk of becoming vulnerable receive good pastoral support, there is inconsistency in the quality of support for their learning. The school provides satisfactory advice to parents and carers about how well their children are doing. Transition arrangements with the high school are secure. The school has effective procedures in place to promote and improve the already good attendance rate.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has accurately identified priorities for the school and is taking appropriate action to raise attainment and improve progress following the dip in the most recent test results at Key Stage 2. Improvement planning is addressing key issues raised in the last inspection, but there is no whole-school overview of developments, and whole-school self-evaluation lacks detail. The school has recently introduced a tracking system for all pupils, which enables leaders to identify underachievement, trigger intervention and hold staff to account. The system has proved successful in accelerating the progress of high-attaining pupils, especially girls in mathematics. Further development to speed progress remains a priority for the school, particularly when the progress of lower-attaining pupils is limited. Monitoring of teaching and learning has recently been more focused on outcomes with a greater use made of data to track pupils' progress. As this is a recent development, the full impact on the quality of teaching and learning and the use of assessment in lesson planning has yet to be evaluated.

Middle leaders provide reports on each subject's progress to the governing body on a regular basis. However, the governing body lacks the opportunity to challenge or question middle leaders about these reports. The governing body is supportive and learning to question school performance, but at present it is too dependent on the information given to it by the headteacher to effectively challenge the school. The school works well with outside agencies to support potentially vulnerable pupils, for example, through links with

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the health authority to tackle obesity. The local authority is supporting the school well through a school improvement group. Partnerships with parents and carers are good. Newsletters, reports on pupils' progress and workshops on ICT and health are valued by parents and carers. The school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination satisfactorily. Pupils from different backgrounds are integrated well into lessons and bullying incidents are kept to a minimum. The school monitors closely the performance of different groups. All safeguarding arrangements are appropriately met. The school has identified effectively the potential risks of pupils becoming vulnerable and works well with other agencies in sharing information. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school is well placed to make links with schools abroad but links with schools in differing circumstances in this country and local businesses are not as well developed.

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	4

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire said that they were happy with their children's experience at Windsor Park. The overwhelming majority said that the school keeps their children safe. As one parent said, 'My child feels very safe and able to speak up and ask for help.' Most parents and carers said that the school helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle and makes sure they are well prepared for the future. A small minority said the school did not take account of their suggestions and concerns or help them to support their children's learning and a similar proportion did not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour but these views were not shared by the large majority of other parents and carers or by inspectors. Inspectors endorse the comments from parents and carers about the inconsistency in teaching and the provision for groups of pupils whose ability is lowest.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Windsor Park CofE (C) Middle 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 116 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 484 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	23	74	64	12	10	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	45	39	69	60	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	22	66	57	19	16	4	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	27	68	59	11	10	6	5
The teaching is good at this school	29	25	71	62	10	9	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	17	67	58	24	21	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	20	85	73	7	6	1	1
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)	26	22	78	68	5	4	3	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	22	70	60	14	12	5	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	25	57	50	21	18	5	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	17	63	55	21	18	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	24	21	68	59	16	14	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	31	66	58	11	10	2	2

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 all 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). 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">■ 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 pupils' 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 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Windsor Park CofE (C) Middle School, Staffordshire, ST14 7JX

You will know that we recently came to inspect your school and I thought you would like to know what we have said in the report.

While your school has a number of strengths, there are several aspects where it requires significant improvements and, consequently, it has been given a notice to improve.

You and your parents and carers told us overwhelmingly that the school keeps you safe and looks after you well. You behave well in and around school and know the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. The school has good links with parents and carers. Those of you who find learning easy are making good progress, and there are several opportunities for you to enjoy additional activities during and after school.

Although most of you reach the expected levels for your age in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave school, those of you who find learning difficult do not make as much progress as you could. Lessons are not always planned well enough to make sure the activities are sufficiently challenging for you. Consequently, we have asked your school to make better use of the individual education plans that some of you have. We have also asked that when teachers mark your work they regularly let you know what you could do to improve it further. We have also asked the school's leaders to make sure that you are set challenging targets to make sure that all learners do as well as they can.

Thank you to those of you who took the time to speak to us. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your future.

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims

Her Majesty's Inspector

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