



Wirksworth CofE Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112864
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289442
Inspection dates 5–6 February 2007
Reporting inspector Alison Cogher

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Greenway Croft
School category	Voluntary controlled		North End, Wirksworth
Age range of pupils	4–7		Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 4FG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01629 822453
Number on roll (school)	59	Fax number	01629 822453
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Steve Johnson
		Headteacher	Mrs Liz Rosser
Date of previous school inspection	24 April 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small infant school in the market town of Wirksworth in Derbyshire. All but a very few pupils are of White British descent and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds and an average number are entitled to free school meals. The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards including Investors in People, Artsmark Silver Status and the Basic Skills Award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Wirksworth Church of England Infant School is a satisfactory and improving school. Parents and pupils are very supportive of the school and value its caring Christian ethos. The recently appointed headteacher provides good leadership. Working effectively with senior staff and governors she has ensured that significant improvements to key aspects of the school's work have been secured over the last year. Subject leaders are involved in school improvement but have not yet taken full responsibility for developing their subjects. However, the improvements already secured, together with the teamwork and commitment to further improvement that is evident in the school, confirm the school's good capacity to improve further. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Systems to check the quality of the school's work are robust and provide an accurate evaluation of the school's provision. This work has secured improvements to the overall quality of education provided. However, more needs to be done to secure better than satisfactory school effectiveness particularly in terms of pupils' achievement and the standards they reach. Staff are keen to learn from each other to improve the opportunities they provide for pupils to learn effectively. By focusing on improving the accuracy of assessment information and the quality of lesson planning the school has successfully improved teaching. Although satisfactory overall, good features of teaching, including planning and the use of resources are evident in all year groups. Good teaching in Year 2 ensures that pupils in this year group make consistently good progress in lessons and develop a good capacity to work independently, but this is not the case in other classes.

Although there is some variation from year to year, standards on entry to the school are broadly typical of pupils entering their Reception year. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving in line with improvements in the rest of the school. Pupils' progress and achievement has been satisfactory through their Reception year and Years 1 and 2. Consequently pupils reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the last year the school has focused on challenging pupils to achieve more. As a result of increased expectations and improved teaching, pupils are generally making better progress in lessons than in previous years. This is clearly shown in school assessment data and pupils' work.

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving as teachers develop ways to stimulate pupils' interest in learning. Some effective links are made between subjects to give pupils' learning relevance, although opportunities to develop pupils' mathematics skills through other subjects are not fully pursued.

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy coming to school and attendance is satisfactory. Their awareness of how to keep safe and healthy is good, as is their contribution to the community. The school works effectively with parents and outside agencies to provide pupils with good quality care, guidance and support. Consequently pupils feel safe and are able to develop trusting relationships with adults and each

other. Assessment information is used well by teachers to guide their planning but not consistently to challenge pupils to achieve as well as they can.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Increase the role of subject leaders in bringing about whole school improvement.
- Improve the quality of teaching by providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills and by improving the use of assessment information to ensure greater challenge for all pupils.
- Increase the links made between mathematics and other subjects to give pupils' learning greater relevance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving. Standards are broadly average. In 2006, standards in Year 2 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics, after being above average in previous years. These results were affected by a higher than usual proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. School records show these pupils made satisfactory progress in relation to their individual abilities. Pupils' work and school based data shows that a significant proportion of pupils currently at the school are making better progress than pupils of similar ability in previous years. This is a clear indication that achievement and standards are rising and is a direct consequence of the action taken to raise expectations and improve teaching. Pupils of all abilities including those with learning difficulties or disabilities and those with specific special educational needs work hard to achieve the challenging targets they are set and say they feel proud when they do achieve them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured well and reflects the caring Christian environment created within the school. Pupils have a well developed sense of right and wrong and a good understanding for their age of the need for rules in society. Almost all pupils behave well and demonstrate good attitudes to learning. When working or playing they cooperate and care for each other. Pupils enjoy their time at school and think it is a very friendly place to be. Pupils' good personal development and the secure literacy and numeracy skills they achieve ensure they are confident about moving to the junior school. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities and rise to the challenge when asked to work independently. They have a good understanding of the importance of eating a well balanced diet and enjoy taking exercise. Pupils make a good contribution to the wider community through their links with the Church and their involvement in town events.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features evident in all year groups. Teachers use assessment information well to guide their lesson planning, although this process does not ensure all pupils are consistently challenged to do their best. Resources are used well to provide a good variety of activities that take account of pupils' preferred way of learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and work effectively with teaching assistants to ensure pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, receive good support. Relationships are positive and pupils will confidently ask for help if they need it. Some activities are too prescriptive and pupils are not encouraged enough to think for themselves or to work independently, although an emphasis on independent working is a feature of the consistently good teaching in Year 2. Lessons in this year group also move at a brisk pace, are very focused on what pupils are expected to learn and present pupils of all abilities with a good level of challenge.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets pupils' needs and is enriched by the school's links with local schools and the wider community. Whilst not developed extensively, visits and visitors are used to extend pupils' learning experiences, as are the immediate locality and the school grounds. For example, pupils visit shops in the town, swim at the local pool and grow vegetables in the school garden. Some links between subjects are identified to give pupils' learning relevance and to provide them with additional opportunities to practise skills they have learned. These links are good in information and communication technology and aspects of literacy, such as writing and speaking and listening. However, opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in other subjects are very limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A strong emphasis is placed on providing an environment for pupils in which each individual pupil can feel safe, secure and cared for. The school succeeds in ensuring this through a combination of robust procedures to safeguard pupils that are consistently implemented and by promoting a strong Christian ethos that reflects the school's Church affiliation. Pupils are nurtured as individuals and say they feel looked after. Systems for checking how pupils are doing have improved significantly over the last year. Teachers use this information well to guide their planning. However, even better use could be made of this information to ensure pupils of all abilities are consistently challenged to achieve their very best. A close working partnership with

parents and outside support agencies ensures pupils who require specific support of any kind get the help they need.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Since her appointment the headteacher has provided strong focused leadership. She is ably supported by the senior leadership staff. Action taken in response to monitoring the school's work has brought about some significant improvements in a short space of time. Teamwork is developing well and all staff are committed to ensuring that pupils have the best possible opportunity to achieve as well as they can. Staff are prepared to be self critical and are willing to learn from each other. There has been some good analysis of school performance data to identify what needs to be improved in the school. Subject leaders are increasingly involved in the school's drive to raise pupils' achievement and standards, but have not yet taken full responsibility for their subjects. Governors know how well the school is doing and are able to provide constructive support and challenge.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

6 February 2007

Dear Children

Wirksworth C of E Infant School, Greenway Croft, Wirksworth, Derbyshire, DE4 4FG

Thank you very much for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school. I really enjoyed being in your lessons and having lunch with you. By talking to me you helped me to find out about your school. I was pleased to hear how friendly you think your school is and how much you enjoy being there. Your parents are very pleased that you enjoy going to school too. The grown ups at school look after you well and help you to learn how to look after yourselves and enjoy being together. Your school is already satisfactory and it is getting better.

Mrs Rosser is a good headteacher and she is working hard with all the other adults to make sure you learn as much as you can. You are learning more than you used to because your teachers know more about what you can do and what you need to learn next and they have got better at making your lessons interesting. You behave well and work hard in lessons to achieve your targets. Well done!

There are some things about your school that could be improved to help you learn even more. I have asked Mrs Rosser to work with your teachers to make sure you all do the very best you can in your reading, writing and mathematics. You are good at taking responsibility so I have asked your teachers to make sure you have more chances to work by yourselves in lessons. You also need more chances to practise what you learn in mathematics in other subjects so I have asked them to do this too.

I hope that you all continue to enjoy your time at school and wish you well for the future.

Alison Cogher Lead Inspector