

Wilson Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109793
Local Authority	Reading
Inspection number	310098
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Christopher Grove

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Christopher Stroud
Headteacher	Ms Mo Galway
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2003
School address	Wilson Road Reading RG30 2RW
Telephone number	01189 015573
Fax number	01189 015575

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized school is situated in an area of high-density housing in Reading. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, of which those from other White and from Black British-African backgrounds are the largest numbers, is well above average, as is the number who are learning English as an additional language. The numbers of pupils starting and leaving the school other than at the expected time are also above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, principally moderate learning or speech, language and communication difficulties, is below average. The school has secured the Basic Skills Quality Mark, and holds the Healthy Schools and Investors in People awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Wilson Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The leadership team and staff have developed a very positive ethos, which has resulted in a happy and inclusive atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Consequently, the school is improving. Relationships between staff and pupils are mutually respectful and are a significant strength. There is a good partnership with parents, the great majority of whom express their confidence in the school. The majority of respondents to the parental questionnaire agreed that their children were well cared for and that they enjoyed school. One parent wrote that 'this is a lovely school, with caring, dedicated teachers, and a supportive environment for learning'.

The good quality of pastoral care and guidance leads to good personal development of pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, the pupils are confident and mature, and show good levels of enjoyment. They behave well around the school, and in classrooms, they are attentive and ready to learn. Pupils are responsive to their teachers and remain on task without adult intervention, when they are working independently.

Pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory. Children's attainment on entry is below that expected for their age. Standards at Key Stage 1 are below average, especially in reading and writing, partly because of the numbers of pupils who are new to learning English. At Key Stage 2, standards remain below average, but have risen a little since 2005. In English, there has been an improving trend over the last two years so that standards are now broadly average. However, attainment in mathematics and science is lower.

Until recently, teaching has not been sufficiently consistent, and this has resulted in pupils' making satisfactory progress in their learning. The quality of teaching across the school is improving, so that a higher proportion is now good. Despite this, the match of some tasks to pupils' individual needs is not always as good as it could be. Although teachers regularly set different tasks for different groups of pupils, some work does not have an appropriate level of challenge for each group. Improvements have been made to the curriculum which is good.

Procedures to offer guidance to pupils about their learning are underdeveloped. Pupils' work is marked with particular success criteria in mind, but teachers do not point out to pupils what they could do to improve. Furthermore, the school does not build sufficiently on pupils' maturity and readiness to learn by setting well-focused targets to guide them towards the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management, and governance, are satisfactory. Some of the school's self-evaluation has been effective, and has led, for example, to the recent improvements in the quality of teaching. However, other checking activities have not had sufficient impact on improving pupils' rates of progress. The school's capacity to make necessary further improvements is satisfactory. There are good partnerships with others, including other primary schools, the feeder secondary school and the external agencies which support pupils with learning needs.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children start nursery with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age. By the end of the Reception class, children make very good progress in their personal and social development. The great majority also reach expected levels in their mathematical development

and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, a lower proportion reach expectations in communication, language and literacy, including writing, because many children are new to learning English. Nevertheless, in all areas of learning, the percentage of children who reach expected levels exceeds national averages. Better communication between the Reception class and the Nursery has supported the development of good teaching and learning, and provided greater choice of activities and resources for children. This has helped them to grow in their independence. Teamwork is strong. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and activities are engaging for children. Accommodation, indoors and outdoors, is used well, even though space is limited, and some resources are rather dated. Staff are well deployed to meet the needs of the children. The children are well cared for; when one child fell off a tricycle, he was tended carefully by an observant member of staff.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' achievement and standards, particularly for boys, in reading and writing in Key Stage 1, and in mathematics and science in Key Stage 2.
- Improve marking and target-setting arrangements so that pupils understand what they should do to improve their progress.
- Improve teachers' use of assessment in order to ensure that tasks set are consistently matched to pupils' individual needs.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards at Key Stage 1 have been below average for some while. However, there has been improvement in all subjects in the last two years, though boys' attainment remains markedly lower than that of girls in reading and writing. The number of pupils who gained the higher Level 3 standard in mathematics was about average in 2007, but the proportion who reached this standard in reading was lower, and in writing, it was much lower.

English results at Key Stage 2 represent good improvement, particularly given the high proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, and the high levels of pupil mobility which the school experiences. Standards in mathematics and science are not as high, mainly because boys' performance is not as good as that of girls. Pupils' progress in English is also better than in mathematics and science, and girls' progress is better than that of boys. Pupils with moderate learning or with speech, language and communication difficulties make the same satisfactory progress as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Many pupils start school with limited social skills. By Year 6, most are polite, friendly, confident in talking to adults, and are considerate with other pupils. They are also keen to help each other. They appreciate the interesting curriculum and teachers' efforts to make lessons fun. Participation in assemblies is good, which supports their spiritual and cultural development well. They contribute well to their school and local community by raising money for charities, serving on the school council, acting as playground buddies and helping with tasks around the

school. New arrivals are warmly welcomed, including those who are learning English as an additional language. This helps them to gain confidence and self-esteem, and to quickly become part of the school community. Pupils know how to stay safe and take responsibility for others. They practise healthy eating; the lunchtime meals provided at school are of good quality, and lunchboxes now contain more fruit and vegetables. The school also participates in the free fruit scheme for younger pupils. Regular sessions of physical education, including swimming, and extra-curricular sports, ensure that pupils take regular exercise. Pupils are adequately prepared for their future economic well-being; although their teamwork skills develop well, their achievement in learning, including numeracy and literacy, is presently only satisfactory. Attendance has improved, and is average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Pupils' relationships with teachers and with teaching assistants are good. Most aspects of lesson planning are good, but some tasks given to pupils are not always sufficiently matched to their needs. Teachers show good subject knowledge. The pace of learning is good, which holds pupils' interest well. Teachers are good at asking pupils questions, and provide opportunities for them to reason, for instance to explain the strategies they use to solve problems in mathematics. Other good opportunities are provided to promote thinking, for example, the use of 'response partners', where pupils begin to formulate answers to teachers' questions after prior discussion with others. Teachers mark pupils' work positively, but do not point out basic errors or indicate sufficiently what pupils should do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well, for instance through work in personal, social and health education and religious education. Curricular planning in mathematics has provided a stronger focus on pupils applying their knowledge and on the strategies for solving problems. Science has been improved through a greater focus on investigative work. The programmes in science, history and geography have been re-worked in order to provide tasks that are more relevant for all pupils. French has been successfully introduced from Year 3. A strong emphasis on visual and practical work benefits all pupils, including those who are acquiring English as an additional language. Some imaginative new initiatives, such as the National Gallery's 'Take One Picture' and 'Book Release' (where books are hidden around school, to be found and read by pupils) contribute successfully to motivation and to enjoyment of learning. Pupils' enjoyment is enhanced by the range of clubs, which include sports and the arts, and special events such as Reading, Mathematics and Healthy Schools Weeks. Pupils particularly enjoy the visit to the residential study centre, meeting the mayor and dressing up in Victorian clothes on a visit to a local museum. Links between subjects are developing. Teachers do not always ensure that basic skills, such as accurate spelling, are improved across all subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Systems to provide child protection and to ensure pupils' health and safety are thorough and robust. Risk assessments are well conducted before school trips. The bursar, caretaker and designated governors walk the premises to assess health and safety risks. First aid is available through the large number of trained teaching assistants. Pupils with additional needs are well catered for. Those pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language are supported well by staff and by their peers. Targets to indicate how pupils could improve their achievement are not sufficiently explicit, or closely enough related to the curriculum or to pupils' current learning. Thus, targets do not provide clear enough guidance to enable pupils to take greater responsibility for their own progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school is clear about its vision and values. The leadership team is cohesive. They have set a good direction for improvement, as is evident in the good quality of pupils' personal development. Leaders undertake a wide range of activities to check the quality of the school's work, leading to the priorities in the improvement plan. Some checking has been well focused and has had impact, for instance, the improvements to the quality of class teaching. However, although other monitoring activities have been conscientiously undertaken, for example the scrutiny of pupils' work, the evidence yielded has not been analysed sufficiently sharply to improve impact. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They demonstrate a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but their role as a critical friend is underdeveloped.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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.

Annex A

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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

13 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wilson Primary School, Reading, RG30 2RW

We would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. Wilson Primary is a satisfactory school and a happy place for children. One of your parents wrote that it is 'a lovely school, with caring, dedicated teachers, and a supportive environment for learning'. There are plenty of positive things about your school. These are the most important ones.

- Your whole school has a happy atmosphere about it.
- You enjoy school and your behaviour in lessons and around school is good.
- You have very good relationships with each other, with the teachers and other adults. They take good care of you.
- Your personal development is good.
- You are making satisfactory progress in your learning.
- The teaching in your school is always at least satisfactory, and is improving.
- The teachers have planned a good curriculum, which is interesting for you.
- Your Mums and Dads are pleased with the school.
- Your school has good relationships with your parents, other schools and the people they ask to come in to help you.

Your headteacher and other leaders have worked hard to improve your behaviour, and the teaching, but some other things need to be better. The school needs to:

- raise your standards, particularly for boys, in reading and writing at Key Stage 1, and in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, so that you achieve better
- improve the way they set targets for you, and the way your work is marked, so that you have a better idea what you should do next to improve your progress
- make sure teachers set tasks for you that are at the right levels for the different pupils in the class.

You can help too by continuing to work hard and taking advantage of the improvements, which your teachers will be making. We really enjoyed our time in your school. We wish you every success in the future.

Chris Grove

Lead Inspector