

Wirksworth CofE Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112864
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	338034
Inspection dates	27–28 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Roy Bowers HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Phil Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Joanne Poyser
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. They observed five teachers and visited eight lessons. They held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, a group of pupils, a group of parents and a representative from a partner agency. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, assessment information, lesson plans, school policies and questionnaires from 37 parents and nine staff. For the past five years the school has been part of a hard federation with Wirksworth Infant School. The headteacher and governing body have the responsibility for the leadership and management of both schools. Separate inspection teams inspected both schools simultaneously.

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

- whether achievement is better in reading, writing and mathematics than at the time of the last inspection
- the impact of the hard federation partnership on the quality of the education for pupils in Wirksworth Church of England Infant school
- whether the school's evaluation of its capacity to improve as good is justified
- the extent of pupils' cultural development.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no pupils from homes where English is not their first language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special needs is below average. The headteacher and governing body lead both schools in the federation. The majority of staff are contracted to the federation rather than Wirksworth CofE Infant School. The federation has achieved National Healthy Schools status and gained the awards of Artsmark and Activemark. There is currently independent child-care provision on site which is not managed by the school's governing body and is not 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Wirksworth Church of England Infant school provides a satisfactory standard of education. The warm and caring relationships in the school help pupils feel safe and secure. The school works effectively with outside agencies to ensure that all pupils, especially the most vulnerable, are cared for well. Pupils are proud of the outstanding contribution that they make to the local community. Nearly all parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire or who met with the inspectors said that they held the school in very high regard.

Pupils' attainment in most year groups is in line with the national average. Pupils' progress over time and their learning in lessons are satisfactory. Effective support and guidance help ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Most pupils attend regularly, behave well and are eager to learn. On the occasions when activities fail to engage pupils' interest and they are required to sit and listen for too long, a small number of pupils become restless and inattentive. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good overall, but pupils' understanding of the diversity of faiths and cultures in the United Kingdom and globally is comparatively weak.

Although there is some good teaching, too much is only satisfactory. In many lessons observed, teachers were not clear enough about what they expected pupils to learn during the lesson. Consequently, the activities given to the pupils were not focused sharply on their learning and pupils were not given sufficient guidance so that they understood the steps to take to improve their work. Teachers' expectations of pupils are often too low and the work given to some pupils is too easy.

The curriculum is enriched well through a wide range of visits, visitors and excellent use of the local environment. However, opportunities are not always taken to ensure that pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are developed through other subjects.

Over the past two years, the headteacher's commitment to improving the life-chances of all the pupils in the local community has been shown through her relentless determination to develop the federation. This has been a major success. Resources are used more effectively, teachers plan together and share their curriculum strengths, and pupils develop confidence and social skills through mixing with a greater number of pupils and interacting more with adults. The federation is now a strong part of the community and is valued highly by parents. Although the initiatives to improve pupils' academic achievement have not yet had a significant impact on most pupils, there are signs that attainment is beginning to rise and pupils are making better progress than at the time of the last inspection. These improvements, especially the benefits of the

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federation to the pupils and the community, show that the school has good capacity to improve. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders are aware that they are not yet sufficiently focusing on pupils' learning when checking the quality of lessons.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics for all groups of pupils so that achievement is good.
- Improve the quality of learning in lessons by:
 - ensuring that all planned activities are focused sharply on pupils' learning
 - ensuring that work given to all groups of pupils is sufficiently challenging
 - improving the guidance that pupils receive so that they understand better the steps to take to improve their work
 - ensuring that leaders focus on pupils' learning when checking the quality of lessons.
- Improve the curriculum by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - ensuring that lessons provide more opportunities for active learning
 - broadening the range of opportunities for pupils to gain a greater understanding of the diversity of faiths and cultures in the United Kingdom and globally.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are typical for children of that age. They make satisfactory progress and, by the time they leave at the end of Year 2, their attainment is usually average in reading, writing and mathematics. There is no notable difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Observations during the inspection show that pupils work hard and behave well when teachers have high expectations and keep them actively engaged in their learning. However, pupils' learning in lessons is only satisfactory mainly because the learning intentions are not planned carefully enough. The good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is because staff know their individual needs well and, during the inspection, pupils were seen to be effectively supported in lessons by teaching assistants. Pupils spoke positively about their teachers and support staff but some said the work is often too easy.

Children develop a good knowledge of how to eat healthily, keep fit and maintain personal hygiene. For example, one parent reported that her child had arrived home

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from school and gave a lengthy demonstration of the correct way to wash her hands. Pupils take on many responsibilities in school and support an exceptionally wide range of community activities. Parents praise the work undertaken by the children for their contribution to well-dressing, the carnival, the local church, the Wirksworth Community award and improving the local environment.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Relationships between teachers and pupils are respectful and caring, and help to provide a positive climate for learning. Although teachers' lesson plans detail the activities pupils are to undertake, they often do not show what pupils are expected to learn during the lesson. Consequently, in many lessons, although the activities provide potentially good learning opportunities, they are not focused enough on pupils' learning, and pupils' skills and knowledge are not built upon well enough. Because teachers' expectations are insufficiently high, work given to pupils sometimes fails to provide enough challenge. In some lessons, teachers talk for too long and do not provide enough time for pupils to engage in practical activities.

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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Several parents commented that one of the many advantages of the federation is that pupils develop a greater awareness of road safety through walking from one school to the other. One parent said, 'My child now automatically holds someone's hand when walking near to a road and is obviously very aware that we all need to take great care'. Teachers are becoming more aware of the need for pupils to practise and extend their writing and numeracy skills in subjects such as history and geography. However, this is still at the early stages of development. A strength of the curriculum is the number of after-school clubs and the way that much of it is linked with the local community and environment.

Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well. Parents say that the staff work very effectively with outside agencies to support those pupils who are potentially vulnerable. All pupils are treated in a respectful manner and included in all that the school has to offer. Parents comment that good induction arrangements when pupils first enter Reception help children quickly settle into their new community.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's skilled and enthusiastic leadership has been instrumental in creating an ambitious team who want to improve the outcomes for all the pupils in the federation. Staff morale is high and there is a strong sense of shared commitment from staff and governors. Since her appointment, much of the headteacher's time and effort has been directed at establishing the federation through unifying the two schools and developing strong links with the local community. The headteacher's drive, determination and hard work have helped ensure that the federation has been a great success. The headteacher has instigated a number of initiatives to improve provision in the federation and raise pupils' achievement. However, the initiatives are not yet having a big enough impact, especially on improving the quality of pupils' learning in lessons. Although the headteacher and the teacher with leadership responsibilities carry out a range of monitoring and evaluation activities, lesson observations are not sufficiently focused on improving learning in lessons. Information on pupils' progress is increasingly being used more rigorously to hold teachers to account for the progress made by their pupils and to provide support for those pupils who are not making enough progress. Governors are becoming increasingly mindful of their responsibilities to the school. However, they are aware that their knowledge of how to hold the school to account for

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pupils' achievement is at the early stages of development.

The strong links with external agencies to provide support for those pupils potentially vulnerable, and the significant improvement in the achievement of the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, show the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. The very strong links with all groups in the local community have contributed to the school's promotion of community cohesion. The school has plans to extend these links to communities outside the local area.

Parents' and carers' views are canvassed and valued. Discussions with several parents throughout the inspection showed that the links between the home and school had improved significantly since the last inspection.

The work undertaken by the school in federating the two schools has improved community cohesion significantly. Parents say that parts of the community are now more unified and believe that the federation is making effective provision for all the local children. The school's plan for improving community cohesion recognises that more needs to be done to give pupils the opportunity to appreciate the diversity of cultures and faiths in the wider society.

At the time of the inspection, the required safeguarding checks had been undertaken by the school, child protection arrangements were secure and risk assessments had been completed for all relevant activities. All staff spoken to showed a sound knowledge of child-protection processes and procedures.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Children enjoy coming to school, and feel safe and secure in a caring and supportive environment. Parents say that induction arrangements have improved significantly since the last inspection and they are welcomed as partners in their child's education. Strong links with the pre-school provider help the adults know the children very well and ensure that children's emotional and welfare needs are identified and accommodated from the start. Children grow in independence and their behaviour is generally good. However, in observations during the inspection, a few children became disruptive because they were not actively engaged in stimulating and challenging activities.

Although there is variation from year to year, most children enter the Reception class with skills which are broadly typical for children of their age and then make satisfactory progress. A wide range of activities across all areas of learning and using indoor and outdoor resources is available for children. However, teachers' planning does not sufficiently focus on helping children build upon their skills. Consequently their learning is only satisfactory.

Children's progress is tracked well through observations of children undertaking activities. The skills of staff in assessing children's progress have improved significantly since the last inspection. Those children who are experiencing difficulties are now identified early and support given.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is enthusiastic to develop all aspects of the provision and improve outcomes, and has many plans to do so. She is aware that her skills of checking the quality of learning in lessons are still at the early stages of development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire or who spoke with the inspectors were exceptionally positive about all aspects of the school. They expressed confidence in the teaching and felt that pupils were kept exceptionally safe. Parents had great faith that the headteacher would continue to improve the school and felt that the federation had benefited the children and the community. However, there were a few negative comments from a very small minority of parents. These were investigated by inspectors and taken into consideration before judgements were made.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wirksworth CofE Infant 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 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 69 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	78	8	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	81	7	19	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	62	12	32	2	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	62	12	32	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	73	9	24	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	57	14	38	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	62	14	38	0	0	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)	21	57	11	30	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	59	14	38	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	43	17	46	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	59	11	30	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	89	4	11	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	84	6	16	0	0	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). 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 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.



29 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wirksworth CofE Infant School, Matlock, DE4 4FG

Thank you for making our recent visit to your school such a pleasant experience. We enjoyed meeting with you, visiting your lessons and hearing what you thought about the school and working with pupils in Wirksworth Infant School. We were pleased to find that you enjoy coming to school and know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe. We were very impressed by the sensible way you behave around school, and we liked the way you play happily together and work hard in lessons. Well done!

You go to a satisfactory school where everyone cares for you. We were very pleased to find out how much you have learned about keeping yourself safe when you are close to the roads. We think that your contribution to the school and the community is excellent. You do so many activities which are fun and exciting and which help other people who live near to you or who visit Wirksworth. The school works hard to make your time at school as enjoyable as possible. The teachers are kind and helpful, and want you all to do your best.

To help the school become better, we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to help you improve in reading, writing and mathematics by making sure that the work you have is not too easy, you are given good guidance on how to improve and teachers give you opportunities to practise your literacy and numeracy skills in many subjects. We have also said that you should learn more about people from a variety of different backgrounds.

You can help too by continuing to work hard and always doing your best.

We shall take away many good memories about your school and have very much enjoyed the time we have spent with you. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers

Her Majesty's Inspector

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