

Wednesbury Oak Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103926
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	355492
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2010
Reporting inspector	David Rzeznik HMI

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 of pupils on the school roll	426
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Dunnaker
Headteacher	Maria Bull
Date of previous school inspection	17 April 2008
School address	Greenacre Road Tipton DY4 0AR
Telephone number	0121 5563387
Fax number	0121 5024850
Email address	info@wednesburyoak.sandwell.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2010
Inspection number	355492

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 15 lessons and 14 teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with senior staff, subject leaders, the Chair of Governors and two parent governors, some pupils in Years 5 and 6 and the School Improvement Partner. No formal meetings were held with parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at documentation, including performance tracking data and the school improvement plan. They also scrutinised pupils' work and analysed the responses from 59 parental, 8 staff and 100 pupil questionnaires.

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

- How effective is teaching, learning and assessment in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6, noting any gender variations in pupils' performance in specific years?
- The improvement in music since the last HMI monitoring report in March 2009, particularly the impact leadership and management are making on raising standards, improving curriculum provision and music resources.
- What measures are being taken to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence and are they effective?
- The quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher and middle leaders particularly in English, mathematics, science and music and its impact.

Information about the school

The school is large and the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The vast majority of pupils are White British with a very small percentage from other minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including statements is below average. This said, the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group varies greatly. An after school club provides child care out of school hours. The provision is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate Ofsted inspection. The school has achieved the Bronze Healthy 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The quality of education is satisfactory but improving rapidly. Over the last 12 months the school has gone from strength to strength. Effective teaching and a much improved curriculum, particularly in English and mathematics has raised standards substantially. Year 6 attainment has risen from well below average to average over this period. There has been a similar rise in attainment in Year 2 with many more pupils reaching the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2010, too few pupils reached the higher National Curriculum levels in mathematics in Year 2 and in science in Year 6. Pupils' handwriting, spelling and punctuation skills are insufficiently developed and staff lack guidance as to how spelling and handwriting skills are taught. Pupils' speaking skills are not as good as they should be. Too many lack fluency when speaking and are reluctant to speak at length. The school lacks a system for assessing the quality of pupils' speech.

Provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Teaching is good and the vast majority of pupils are now achieving well in each key stage. Lesson planning is much improved and work is mostly matched to pupils' capabilities. However, on occasions the pitch of work is not quite right for some groups or individual needs. Teachers do encourage pupils to communicate in class but they do not do enough modelling of language to improve pupils' vocabulary and grammatical skills. Senior leaders have been very effective in eliminating poor teaching and supporting staff to raise their game. Good teachers have been recruited and more importantly have been retained. In the recent past there has been too much staffing turbulence which has adversely affected pupils' learning. Stability has led to consistency and continuity in teaching and learning which has accelerated pupils' progress at a good rate.

The curriculum is satisfactory with good emphasis placed on developing basic skills. Provision is good in English and mathematics and is now satisfactory in music rather than inadequate. Pupils' have very positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Attendance is satisfactory and the measures taken to bring about improvement, particularly reducing persistent absence have been effective. Pupils are well cared for and they feel safe and secure. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are doing a good job and with the support of governors are driving improvement at a fast pace. A few middle leaders are new and/or temporarily in post. They require support and further skills development to fulfil their responsibilities. The new creative curriculum is not fully implemented and because it is in its infancy it is too early to evaluate its impact. Self-evaluation is fair and accurate because the tools used for self-review are effective. A coherent framework exists for monitoring provision which ensures that leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and what must be improved. Achievement, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of provision in the early years are much better than at the time of the last inspection. This demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science by:
 - using assessment information more consistently to ensure that work is always closely matched to pupils' capabilities
 - improving the tracking of pupils' performance in science to pinpoint the progress made by different groups to inform intervention
 - producing spelling and handwriting policies by November 2010, and effectively implement them, to improve pupils' spelling, punctuation, handwriting and grammatical skills
 - encouraging pupils to be more independent learners in Years 1 to 6, and less reliant on teachers, by finding things out for themselves.
- Improve pupils' speaking skills by:
 - ensuring staff effectively model language structures to develop pupils' vocabulary and grammar skills
 - assessing pupils' spoken language to identify strengths in their speech and what must be improved
 - providing more opportunities in class for pupils to talk in sentences, using correct grammar.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - further improving the skills and expertise of middle leaders, particularly those new to their role
 - fully embed and evaluate the impact of new curriculum initiatives to raise standards in foundation subjects, such as music.
- 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

Pupils' progress accelerated quickly last academic year and pupils' achievement is good. Pupils' enjoy school as demonstrated by their much improved attendance. Better teaching, an improved curriculum and more effective subject leadership are ensuring that pupils are making good gains in their learning, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Their musical skills are also developing satisfactorily. Boys and girls are achieving well and there is no longer a gap between the standards they reach in this school and their counterparts nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very small number for whom English is an additional language are making good or better progress in developing their basic skills. Work set for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is usually challenging so that they are suitably stretched. Effective group and one-to-one intervention based on the objectives identified in pupils' individual education plans ensures teaching is geared to individual's specific learning needs.

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

In the Early Years Foundation Stage children are learning to be independent, share and take turns and join in activities for sustained periods of time. In other years there is generally a lack of opportunities for pupils to undertake independent work initiated by themselves. A scrutiny of older pupils writing reveals that they are learning to use more descriptive language when writing and their ideas and consequently their storylines are developing well. However, too many pupils are not learning to spell and punctuate accurately or write consistently in a fluent joined style. When pupils are given the opportunity to talk in class they do so. However, many are not learning to talk in sentences, using correct grammar early enough. Pupils are keen to succeed and give of their best. Their engagement, concentration and application in lessons are good.

Pupils continue to make a sound contribution to the community as prefects and playground buddies. There is a school council but its role is mainly confined to raising funds for the needy. Pupils are not involved enough in school decision making or encouraged to make a difference in the wider community. Pupils' moral and social skills are developing well. However, their understanding of spiritual and cultural diversity is limited, primarily because pupils have little contact with lifestyles different from their own.

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	3
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	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

There are clear strengths in teaching. Staff have formed very good relations with pupils and manage their behaviour well. Teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics, history

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

and English is good and this means concepts are taught securely. Good use is made of open ended questioning to extend pupils' thinking and check their understanding. In the minority of lessons where teaching was satisfactory it was mainly because expectations were not high enough and/or assessment information was not being used effectively to pitch work at the right level. Therefore, learning was consolidated rather than being extended. On occasions lessons are too teacher led and pupils are overly reliant on the teacher for direction.

A good assessment feature is the use of learning ladders and steps to success criteria to help pupils identify what has been achieved and what must be improved. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the National Curriculum level they are working at and the targets to be achieved.

The music curriculum is satisfactory and is suitably broad and balanced. It is also appropriately resourced. The school is beginning to introduce a new creative curriculum, where foundation subjects are linked together to make learning more meaningful and enjoyable. The early signs are that the creative curriculum is getting off to a good start. The last inspection report indicated that the time allocated for physical education in most year groups was less than the recommended two hours per week. This weakness has been successfully remedied. An extensive programme of extra-curricular activities is provided and take up is very high.

Pastoral care is good. The work undertaken with outside agencies to improve attendance has been effective. Targeted action, particularly at families who do not send their children to school regularly enough has been very successful. For example, in 2009 persistent absence was high and now it is zero.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team have worked closely with governors and the local authority to turn the performance of this school around. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been instrumental in setting ambitious targets for improvement and ensuring that they are met. It has taken time for staff training, improved provision and better teachers and resources to result in improved outcomes. The last year has seen the fruits of their labour with attainment rising rapidly and happier pupils, parents and carers.

The restructuring of the senior management team has been beneficial in promoting team working and making best use of the expertise that exists. Leaders effective monitoring of teaching has identified what is working well and what must be improved. The leadership

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

of music is now secure and curriculum provision and resourcing of the subject are satisfactory. The tracking of pupils' progress in English and mathematics is of good quality but it is not robust enough in science. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. Governors understand the challenges the school faces and are directly involved in setting appropriate priorities for improvement. Governors fulfil their statutory duties; ensure the school lives within its budget and hold the staff to account for its outcomes.

Concerted action to promote equality of opportunity has resulted in a significant improvement in the performance of the school as a whole and for different groups. Gaps in attainment are narrowing and the school has identified where further improvement can be made to overcome any variations in outcomes. Leaders ensure pupils and others can learn in an environment free from intimidation. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. The school knows its place in the local and wider community and promotes good race relations. However, leaders are at the early stage of formally evaluating the quality and impact of its community cohesion work.

Safeguarding procedures are robust. All staff have been suitably trained to fulfil their child protection responsibilities. Good quality fire assessments have been completed.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter school with basic skills that are well below those found typically for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning and by the time they enter Year 1, are working securely within the expected levels for their age. Induction arrangements are very good and this means children settle quickly and feel at ease in their surroundings. A good range of assessment strategies are used to collect information about what children can and cannot do. For example, observations have identified that some children lack

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

confidence in using their number skills to solve simple mathematical problems, so this is rightly a priority for improvement. Assessment information is used well to plan activities that children enjoy and with an appropriate level of challenge. Staff are good at drawing on children's interests to motivate them to learn. For example, a focus on dinosaurs arose from conversations with children. Staff build up a good record of children's development through observation and undertaking specific assessment tasks. Learning journey booklets provide a record and useful account of the progress made by individuals. These are shared with parents and others. Teaching is effective and a good balance is struck between adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Indoor and outdoor areas are generally well resourced; promote all areas of learning well, especially social and physical development. Some role play areas could be better resourced and broken equipment is not removed quickly. Children are well cared for and work and play alongside one another harmoniously. This phase is led and managed well. Provision is monitored effectively and good links have been established with parents and carers.

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 response rate was fairly low with less than a fifth of parents and carers completing a questionnaire. Therefore, results should be treated with caution. Overall the large majority of parents and carers have positive views about the school and its work. They are particularly pleased that their children enjoy school and are kept safe.

A small minority had concerns about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour; that they are not kept informed about their children's progress; teaching and their children's progress could be better and the school could be more effectively led and managed. Inspectors investigated these concerns during the inspection. Teaching has improved greatly in the last 12 months and is now good overall. Pupils are now making good gains in their learning although in previous years their progress has not been consistently good. The school deals effectively with incidents of misbehaviour when unacceptable behaviour occurs. There are sufficient channels to keep parents and others informed about children's progress. For example, parental consultation evenings are held three times a year and an annual report on progress is provided. There are also other events during the academic year which parents and carers can attend to update them on the progress of their children. These are not always well attended. The school is effectively led and managed and this explains why standards are rising quickly and teaching and pupils' achievement is much better than at the time of the last inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wednesbury Oak 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 426 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	39	29	49	4	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	34	36	61	3	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	15	25	29	49	14	24	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	22	32	54	11	19	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	12	20	36	61	9	15	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	15	35	59	12	20	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	20	39	66	7	12	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)	6	10	40	68	8	14	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	19	37	63	10	17	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	17	38	64	9	15	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	7	41	69	12	20	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	6	10	41	69	9	15	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	17	36	61	8	14	4	7

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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.



17 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wednesbury Oak Primary School, Tipton, DY4 0AR

As you know, inspectors visited your school recently. I am writing this letter to tell you what we found out. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming and telling us what you think about life in school. Inspectors judge that your school is satisfactory and is improving rapidly.

Inspectors like these things about your school

You enjoy school, have very positive attitudes to learning and behave well. However, some of you could attend more regularly.

You are making good progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics and many more of you are reaching the standards you are expected to achieve.

You are well taught and know what personal targets must be achieved and what National Curriculum level you are working at.

It was good to see the youngest children settling into school so quickly. Staff and children in the Nursery and Reception really like the new accommodation.

You are well cared for and you say you feel safe and secure.

The headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team. They are doing a good job and the school is improving at a fast pace.

The school must do three things to improve further

We want you to continue to improve your reading, writing, mathematical and science skills and more of you to reach the expected and higher National Curriculum levels in each year group.

Your speaking skills are not as good as they should be. I want your teachers to show you how to speak properly and for you to copy what they say. When you speak try and talk in sentence.

We have asked the senior leaders and governors to make sure that the new curriculum is put into place and that teachers who are doing new jobs are helped to make a success of them.

Yours sincerely

David Rzeznik

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.