

Wickersley Northfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106909
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	377488
Inspection dates	22–23 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Christine Millett

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	468
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Craig Bonnett
Headteacher	Sue Warner
Date of previous school inspection	04 February 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons or parts of lessons given by 14 members of staff, held meetings with groups of pupils, a representative of the governing body, parents and carers, and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at work in pupils' books, school policies and plans, data tracking pupils' progress and records on safeguarding, health and safety and attendance. Inspectors considered the 139 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Current levels of attainment and progress being made in Key Stage 2.
- Provision for the learning of a modern foreign language.
- The effectiveness of the promotion of community cohesion.

Information about the school

Wickersley Northfield is larger than the average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A very small minority are from other ethnic groups. None is at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average as is the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The school has achieved a number of awards including Healthy School status, Investors in People and the Anti-bullying Award. There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher. The school operates its own breakfast club.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Wickersley Northfield is a good school. Lessons are interesting and the quality of teaching is good. Pupils enjoy school, as shown by their above average attendance and enthusiastic attitudes to learning. One pupil spoke for many when he described the school as, 'awesome!' An important feature of the school is the good spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils and their excellent social development. Safeguarding arrangements are good, pupils know how to keep safe, and they have a good understanding of what is involved in leading a healthy life. Pupils say they are well cared for and well prepared for the next stages in their education. The promotion of community cohesion is good and pupils are helped to develop an appreciation of their own and wider national and international communities through the curriculum and charitable enterprises. Pupils also benefit from the opportunity to learn French as their modern foreign language in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage. Recent cohorts have made good gains in their learning so that by the time they enter Year 1 their skills and abilities are a little above those expected nationally except in linking sounds and letters and calculation. While attainment is broadly average over time, there is an improving trend. Attainment is above average for the current Year 6. Furthermore, recent assessments show that progress is accelerating further in mathematics and English, particularly in Key Stage 2.

The carefully planned curriculum has captured the imagination of all pupils and has helped to quicken rates of progress for all groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar levels of progress as their peers because of the well-targeted support they receive. Teachers assess pupils' progress well and provide precise oral feedback during lessons. However, written feedback in books is not always of the same high quality. Clear information about how well pupils are doing is not consistent and they are rarely given the opportunity to respond to teachers' suggestions.

Under the committed direction of the headteacher, priorities for improvement have been accurately identified. New subject leaders are rapidly developing their skills and are involved in the regular monitoring of teaching and learning as well as leading new curriculum developments. The governing body self-evaluates and seeks to broaden its members' skills so that they monitor the school's performance well. They are active partners in driving the school forward. Parents and carers are provided with a wide range of information about school events and what their children are

learning in class. There is accurate and reflective assessment of strengths and areas for development. Leaders and managers have a shared commitment to raise attainment further as reflected in the challenging targets set. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of written feedback to pupils by:
 - ensuring work is marked regularly
 - making sure pupils have clear information about how well they are doing and the level they are working at
 - ensuring pupils understand the next steps in their learning
 - giving pupils the opportunity to respond to teachers' marking.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

There have been fluctuations in the abilities of children on entry to the Nursery class. Children now enter with skills and knowledge that are in line with those typical for their age. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage so they are well prepared for learning in Year 1. The school's rigorous tracking system shows that from their different starting points, all pupils make good progress. This is a strongly improving picture and the current Year 6 are on track to meet their challenging targets.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They enjoy their work and one pupil summed this up saying, 'teachers help you learn and want you to do well.' A high level of enjoyment and good quality learning was seen in a mathematics lesson where pupils learned about ratio and its application to a real-life situation through the mixing and tasting of fruit drinks.

Relationships at every level are good. Pupils treat adults and each other with respect and collaborate well in lessons. Positive attitudes and a good work ethos are constantly reinforced. Pupils show pride in their school and willingly take on responsibilities such as the Eco-champions and enterprise activities. Strong personal development alongside good achievement and competent skills in information and communication technology ensure they are well placed for the move to the next stage in their education. The breakfast club gives pupils who attend a good start to the day.

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

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

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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching across the school is good overall with some outstanding practice. Teachers make the purpose of lessons clear to pupils, referring closely to the success criteria for the lesson and so learning moves at a good pace. Pupils are involved in self-evaluation of their work against these. Assessment of pupils' progress is thorough, particularly that of writing tasks. Underachievement is identified quickly and appropriate support provided. The marking of pupils' work does not always make next steps in learning clear. Other adults give valuable support either in the classroom or in small groups.

The implementation of an innovative, 'learning journey' approach to the curriculum has accelerated pupils' progress. The main focus has been to provide a purpose for writing. Pupils' engagement and involvement in their own learning have increased significantly. Pupils are excited and say they enjoy lessons more. One pupil described it as, 'everything beginning to make sense'. Cross-curricular skills are developing well. Extra-curricular activities through school clubs, visitors and trips extend and enrich pupils' experiences. As does the teaching of French by a specialist teacher.

Pupils are valued as individuals and the good care provided in school is extended well through prudent links with a range of support services. Pupils who are potentially vulnerable through their circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided for well. Transition arrangements at all stages are sensitively organised so pupils are confident about moving to the next stage of their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has established an ambitious and united drive to improve the school. A sharp focus on tracking pupils' progress and improving the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Key Stage 2, has resulted in improved attainment. The challenges posed by changes to teaching staff have been managed well. The governing body is supportive, knowledgeable and brings a range of skills to its role. Through a secure committee structure it plays an effective part in monitoring

and evaluating the work of the school. Safeguarding and child protection procedures are firmly embedded and reviewed regularly.

Good links have been established with the local community and links with those beyond the school are being enhanced through activities such as 'Shoes for Africa'. There are secure plans to improve pupils' awareness of the diversity of faiths and cultures in the United Kingdom. The school benefits from the strong partnerships established with local schools and a range of support services to support pupils and improve achievement. Equality of opportunity is promoted well for all pupils. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. Good provision ensures there is no unevenness in performance for different groups of pupils.

These are the grades for the 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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery class with skills that are in line with those typical for their age. They develop a love of learning because they are provided with a range of well-resourced and stimulating learning experiences. Children are encouraged to be independent and also to play together and share. For example, two boys were engrossed in fishing letters out of the water tray in order to spell their names. Activities across all areas of learning are well planned and also take account of children's interests. Children are well taught and all staff provide good care for them in both the indoor and outdoor learning areas. Well-focused teaching sessions ensure all children make good progress, whatever their individual starting points. Staff interact well with children when they are playing and subtle questioning helps extend their ideas and encourages their speaking skills. Good leadership ensures that staff work as an efficient and enthusiastic team. Staff monitor children's development carefully both informally, while they are playing, and in adult-led sessions. Good links between school and home mean parents and carers are kept fully involved in their child's development.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Approximately one quarter of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. A small number felt unable to respond to some of the questions. Of those who did, the overwhelming majority agreed their child enjoyed school and that school kept their child safe. Overall, the very large majority were happy with the education the school provides. A similar proportion felt that teaching was good; their child was making progress and being prepared well for the future. The large majority agreed the school informed them of their child’s progress and they were well supported. A small minority expressed concerns about behaviour while a minority felt the school did not take their views into account. These issues were followed up by the inspectors. It was found that the school has effective procedures in place in relation to the issues raised.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wickersley Northfield 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 139 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 475 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	74	53	59	42	6	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	71	51	66	47	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	40	29	70	50	22	16	5	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	35	66	47	14	10	5	4
The teaching is good at this school	50	36	67	48	14	10	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	30	61	44	19	14	8	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	36	72	52	9	6	3	2
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)	45	32	76	55	3	2	3	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	32	74	53	13	9	5	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	29	72	52	13	9	8	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	25	70	50	20	14	7	5
The school is led and managed effectively	37	27	63	45	21	15	10	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	37	68	49	16	12	2	1

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



24 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wickersley Northfield Primary School, Rotherham, S66 2HL

Thank you for being so helpful and polite to us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. You told us that you come to a good school and we agree.

This is what we found out about your school.

- We were impressed to see how much you enjoy your lessons. You told us you find learning fun because teachers make your lessons interesting.
- You get on together and behave well.
- You know a lot about being safe and healthy.
- We found that you make good progress in your time at school and you are well cared for by all adults.
- You make a good contribution to your community and you are learning a lot about the world in which you live.
- Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body work well together to make your school a happy place in which to learn.
- Your school is successful in helping you prepare for the next stages in your education.

We think that with your help your school can improve even more and we have asked your headteacher and your teacher when marking your work to:

- make sure you have clear information about how well you are doing and the level you are working at
- ensure you understand the next steps in your learning
- give you the opportunity to respond to your teachers' marking.

We believe that this will help you to make more progress.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Christine Millett
Lead inspector

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