



Inspection Report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 106404
LEA Wigan
Inspection number 277550
Inspection dates 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mr John Heap CfBT Lead Inspector

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

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Clifton Street |
| School category | Community | | Worsley Mesnes |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | Wigan, Lancashire WN3 5HN |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01942 776457 |
| Number on roll | 266 | Fax number | 01942 776458 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Councillor Rotherham |
| Date of previous inspection | 4 December 2000 | Headteacher | Mrs Brenda Szwandt |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Age group 3 to 11 | Inspection dates 7 December 2005 - 8 December 2005 | Inspection number 277550 |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school in a socially and economically deprived area of Wigan. Most children are of white, British heritage with a small proportion of children of other ethnic groups. Twenty-six per cent of children are entitled to free school meals, which is above average. Many children start in the Nursery with poor language and social skills. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average. The school moved into a new building in September 2003 and offers good facilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that it is good and provides good value for money. One typical parent wrote: 'We feel that the school takes great steps to provide a good, balanced and achievable education for all the children'. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior staff know the school well. This has led to good improvement and the school is well placed to improve further. Children enter the Nursery with below average skills, but they are much lower than this in communication, language and literacy. Provision in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) is good and children make good progress. Standards in national tests vary according to the ability of the group of children with some years being below average when the proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is high. In most respects, all groups of children make good progress in their learning, but only satisfactory gains are made in their writing. The school has identified the need to improve writing. Teaching and learning are good. There is some variation in the quality of marking, but this is not surprising given the high level of recent changes in staffing. Monitoring is effective and the school rightly judges that the quality of teaching is improving and standards are rising.

The school has successfully developed a good curriculum, strong guidance and support and outstanding care. As a result, children's personal development is good. Attendance over time was rising, but it dropped to a low level last year, when a severe bout of illness hit the school.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards in writing by:

- promoting higher expectations in basic skills, particularly in Years 1 and 2
- creasing the use of writing in all subjects

and also by:

- improving attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Children start school with below average standards and very weak skills in communication, language and literacy. Progress is good, but standards have stayed stubbornly below average by the age of seven. Reading, mathematics and science continue to be stronger than writing. The school is aware of this and helpful initiatives are fostering more progress. Challenging targets for Year 1 and 2 children are indicating better national test results this year. However, teaching and learning of writing is not rigorously focused on developing good basic skills, or providing more opportunities for writing across the range of subjects. Consequently, progress in writing is satisfactory. Results in national tests fluctuate

over time and this is a consequence of varying proportions of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. By the end of Year 6, standards are much nearer the average. National data shows that children make good progress in mathematics and science and satisfactory progress in English. A big improvement since the last inspection has been in information and communication technology (ICT), where standards are now good and children are more confident.

Children in care, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good and children enjoy school. They behave well and are courteous and friendly towards visitors. Children respect their teachers, want to please them and understand that they are at school to learn. Children contribute well to school life through, for example, an effective school council. They learn to listen to others and to discuss a point constructively. They are currently working on a project to develop their school playing field and this provides the opportunity to work well as a team. Older children take responsibility and develop their social skills and relationships well through being 'Playtime Buddies'.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children develop a good understanding of the diversity of world cultures, respect for others and the difference between right and wrong. Teachers ensure that children work safely and healthy lifestyles are well promoted. Children enjoy participating

in events like 'healthy food' week and enjoy the good range of sporting activities which encourage healthy exercise.

Despite a rising trend, attendance fell last year to well below the national average which is inadequate. The school has good systems in place to effect improvement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Inspection evidence matches the checks made by the school. Senior managers have been effective in making sure that the high turnover of staff in recent years has not had too great an effect on children's progress. Moreover, where the school has found a weakness, specialist teaching has improved learning and achievement, for example in ICT. Teachers set individual learning targets that are well known by the children and are particularly successful in Years 2 and 6. When the teaching is most effective the main features are: the close match of work to children's needs; the good planning and emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills; good pace; and challenging expectations. However, there is some variation in the quality of marking and this leads to inconsistent quality of basic skills in writing. In

the Foundation Stage, staff know the children well and, as a result, they focus on children's specific needs and progress is good. The quality of support from teaching assistants is good and all groups of learners progress well. As one parent of a child with learning difficulties put it: '...school has worked really well with my son, myself and outside agencies in order to provide as much help as possible for him.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good curriculum that meets statutory requirements. Children's learning is enriched and extended by the many worthwhile and sometimes exciting learning experiences provided, such as the wide range of out of school activities, learning to speak French, ICT and art. The school recognises that many of the children do not have a wide set of experiences and this is one of the reasons why their skills and ideas for writing are weak. Activities are generally planned well to match the needs of children with talents, and of different capabilities. However, the planned activities to develop writing skills in other subjects are inadequate, particularly in Key Stage 1. Children are taught well to stay safe and keep healthy. Issues such as exercise, healthy eating and potential risks that children may face as they get older are regularly raised in assemblies and class discussions. Children say that they enjoy what the school provides.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Overall, care, guidance and support for children are good. However, the level of care is outstanding because teachers, assistants, the learning mentor and outside agencies all work together effectively. They make sure that children have the skills and knowledge they need. This is reflected in children's good personal development. The school council provides good opportunities for children to play a part in decision making and many children hold responsibilities in the school that they fulfil well. Any child who has difficulties or might be vulnerable is given sensitive support. Staff are vigilant and take prompt action to ensure that children's continuing development is nurtured well. Child protection procedures are well understood and properly applied by all staff. Academic guidance has improved with the greater use of individual learning targets. Where practice is best, children explain clearly how their targets tell them what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that leadership and management are good.

The headteacher gives a strong steer to the school's work based on her good knowledge of the children's needs. She takes good account of the views of children, parents and local authority advice. As a result, many worthwhile initiatives have widened children's learning experiences, ensured their well-being and developed the children's good

personal skills. Most of all, she actively promotes each child's right to benefit equally from what the school has to offer. Well developed links with parents, other schools, training institutions and other agencies have enriched the arts and sport and helped to lower the barriers to learning.

The leadership team evaluates the school's performance accurately. Improved monitoring and assessment systems provide sharp insights into the quality of education and children's achievements. The impact is evident already in:

- the Foundation Stage, where the leader has good awareness of what to do next to improve children's achievement;
- the school's awareness that there are shortcomings in writing across the school;
- the accurately identified needs and rigorous checks in the school improvement plan.

Improvement since the last inspection is good and the school is well placed to improve further. Governance is sound and meets statutory duties. Governors are keen to support the school. They use their financial expertise well to check budgeting and provide a sound level of challenge. As a result, financial management is good and the school is successful in getting value for money when purchasing supplies and services.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

| | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 4 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 | NA |

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 2 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

We thoroughly enjoyed being in your good school this week. It has been a privilege and a pleasure for us to work with you and the staff of the school. We were delighted that many of you wished to talk with us and we were impressed by the courtesy and help you provided.

What we really liked about your school:

- the way that your reading, mathematics and science skills are getting better
- the way you work hard in school to help each other, behave well and get on with adults and visitors
- the good teaching and learning
- the good programme of work and excellent care that benefits your time in school.

What we have asked your teachers to improve:

- the quality of your writing. We have asked your teachers to make sure that your handwriting, spelling and punctuation are always the best you can do. You can be very helpful here by always doing your best work. We have also asked them to let you do more writing in other subjects, such as history, geography, religious education and science
- the level of attendance. Again, you can be very helpful by making sure that you come to school on every day that you are able.

The inspection team wishes you well and good luck for the future.