

Wadworth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106715
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	309207
Inspection dates	20–21 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Swallow

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Anthony Senior
Headteacher	Mrs A Mann
Date of previous school inspection	12 January 2004
School address	Meadow Rise Wadworth Doncaster South Yorkshire DN11 9AP
Telephone number	01302 851451
Fax number	01302 857272

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wadworth primary is a smaller than average sized school which is in the centre of the village community that it serves. An increasing number of children join from surrounding villages. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than at the time of the last inspection, and above the national average. The school has gained Healthy School Status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a rapidly improving school that provides a good quality education. The headteacher shows focused and determined leadership. Since coming into post two years ago, she has worked tirelessly to address the challenges arising from significant changes in staffing and to improve pupils' achievement and standards. As a result, arrangements to tackle the previously satisfactory progress made by most pupils and, in particular, to respond to the fall in overall performance in 2007, are now successful features of the school's work. Self-evaluation is accurate and priorities for improvement are the right ones to move the school forward. For example, the leadership realises fully that achievement and standards across the school are still not yet high enough, particularly across Years 1 and 2. The supportive governing body is becoming more involved in understanding how well the school is doing and in challenging rates of progress. The senior leadership team and, increasingly, other staff are actively involved in tracking individual pupils to prevent them from falling behind. Parents recognise all of this good work. They say that 'all of the teachers and classroom assistants are friendly and helpful', and that the school puts on a range of interesting activities, whilst still 'pushing hard on literacy and numeracy'. Nevertheless, some feel the school could do more to seek their views and take account of them.

Standards in the current Year 6 are now above average in English and mathematics, and well above average in science. This represents overall good achievement, given that pupils' starting points are in line with national expectations. Pupils make particularly good progress across Years 3 to 6. The Reception class gets most children off to a sound start. However, progress across Years 1 and 2 is not as good as higher up in the school. By the end of Year 2, standards are average in reading and mathematics and slightly below average in writing. This is because improvements in teaching have not yet had sufficient time to impact fully on pupils' skills, particularly in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, largely due to the closely targeted support they receive. Overall teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good. Teachers are eager to learn from each other to improve their work.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy school. Their behaviour is good and, for the most part, they work and play in a calm and sensible manner. Most pupils recognise how to keep safe and healthy. They are increasingly well prepared for life beyond school because of their improving levels of literacy and numeracy, and because they attend well. The curriculum is good. The recent changes made to lessons mean that they are lively and interesting. Pupils respond positively, stimulated by the many visits and visitors to school. The quality of care and guidance is good. Pastoral care is of a particular high quality, and the school provides precise and regular information so that pupils know what they need to do to make the next steps in their learning. Parents say that they really appreciate the information that they receive on the progress that their children make.

The high quality of leadership by the headteacher and developing strengths of the senior leadership team and governing body, have led to marked recent progress in moving the school forward. These factors ensure that the school has good capacity for further improvement and that it provides good value for money. Nonetheless, action plans to enhance further the quality of learning are neither clear enough about how improvements will be checked, nor about the exact nature of the improvements required.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children join the Reception class with a varied range of experiences and skills. Overall, their attainment on entry is in line with national expectations for their age, although for some, writing and understanding simple numbers are weaker areas. The relatively new Foundation Stage leader has put in place a range of activities to enable children to develop more rapidly their basic language and mathematics skills. Consequently, achievement and standards are improving, and by the start of Year 1 most children are working securely within the early learning goals. They make particularly good progress in developing their personal, social and emotional skills. They are less confident in their general knowledge and understanding, and in their creative and physical development. The Foundation Stage team works effectively to maximise opportunities for learning and provide a varied and stimulating environment. Well-conceived steps are in place to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, and their ability to link sounds and letters. Children's progress is carefully monitored throughout. Adults are becoming more skilful in the assessments they make and, consequently, activities are increasingly matched to children's needs. The majority of children quickly develop positive attitudes and learn to relate well to each other. They enjoy the range of activities provided for them, although the school recognises that there is scope for widening those that take place outdoors. Children are well cared for and encouraged increasingly to make choices and initiate their own learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards of writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Ensure that plans for improvement have clear arrangements for checking the impact of initiatives on the quality of learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make increasingly good progress in relation to their starting points, attaining above average standards by the time they reach Year 6. In particular, they make very good progress in science, reaching well above average standards. Overall rates of progress have improved significantly since the last inspection, largely due to improvements made in the quality of teaching and learning. Following several years of average attainment, and a dip in standards in 2007, progress has picked up significantly across Years 3 to 6 of late, and the school's information shows that increasing numbers of pupils are set to exceed national expectations this summer.

Significant changes in staffing, and more targeted intervention work with pupils at risk of underachievement are accelerating rates of progress in English and mathematics. Progress is less marked across Years 1 and 2. Standards in reading, and mathematics are average by the end of Year 2 but lag a little behind in writing, representing satisfactory achievement overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of the carefully planned, additional support they receive. The school sets increasingly challenging targets to raise attainment and is making progress towards reaching them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are confident and enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in their above average attendance. They say they feel safe and are well looked after by adults. They know who to turn to if they have a problem, and say that bullying is extremely rare and quickly dealt with. 'This school is like your family. You can go to anyone for help', is a typical comment. The 'family' ethos means that relationships are strong. This fosters pupils' self-esteem and builds their confidence to tackle challenging tasks. Behaviour is good and contributes well to good learning in classrooms. Pupils know about the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and participate in a wide variety of physical education and sporting activities. Older pupils take on roles of responsibility within the school, applying for jobs as library monitors, working as lunchtime receptionists and playground helpers. The school council is active in suggesting improvements and organising events to raise money for playground equipment. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's four 'cornerstones' of 'enjoy and be happy', 'be a team player', 'always be the best you can be' and 'learning to learn for life', are well understood. As a result, pupils make sensible choices and work and play cooperatively.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Central to pupils' progress in this school is the increasingly good work of their teachers. There is a tangible feeling of everyone working together as a tightly knit team to maximise the quality of what goes on in classrooms. Lessons are lively and interesting, with plentiful opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas or solve problems with a partner. This means that they are very much involved in their work and, consequently, very attentive. Interactive technology and practical resources are used effectively to engage pupils' interest and to stimulate different ability groups. Teaching assistants provide carefully planned support. The result is enthusiastic pupils who are becoming confident in their capacity to learn and succeed. Teachers value all pupils. Questioning is used well to check understanding and develop speaking and listening. Teachers are extending opportunities within lessons to assess how much has been learned, and marking in English is showing how to give helpful advice on what pupils need to do next to improve. Improvements in teaching are improving pupils' achievement well but have had insufficient time to fully impact on pupils' skills, particularly in writing in Years 1 and 2.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has recently been extensively reviewed to provide opportunities that motivate and stimulate all pupils. Careful planning ensures that the needs and interests of all pupils are met. Older pupils have recently devised their own curricular themes which heighten their interest. Key reading, writing and mathematical skills are now regular features of all lessons and, increasingly, pupils learn actively and benefit from first-hand experiences. There are good opportunities for pupils to enhance their learning with visits to places of interest, residential visits, and a range of visitors to the school. Musicians, community wardens, road safety officers and African drummers, help to bring learning alive. Strong links with other primary schools and the local secondary school provide regular inter-school sporting opportunities. This is complemented by a large number of extra-curricular clubs, including street dance, homework

classes and the choir that contribute much to pupils' personal development. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to support and enhance learning. Personal, social and health education promotes effectively pupils' understanding of the importance of safe and healthy lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Health and safety procedures, child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. High quality care is at the heart of all that the school does. Pupils say that they always feel safe and parents value the close contact with adults who supervise their children. 'There is always someone to talk to, should the need arise', is a commonly shared belief. Good links with outside agencies ensure that the welfare of vulnerable pupils is well provided for. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified so that their needs can be met. A range of carefully planned programmes provides additional support by a team of specialist staff. Higher achieving pupils are also well supported through additional mathematics problem-solving lessons and extension activities in the classroom. Recently refined tracking systems, combined with challenging but realistic targets, are ensuring that all pupils understand what is expected of them and, increasingly, what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's far-sighted leadership and relentless drive to improve achievement and raise standards are major factors behind the school's rapid and recent improvement. Her vision for developing the talents of every child and providing rich learning experiences has energised staff, inspiring them to pursue the best possible outcomes for all pupils. Staff speak very highly of the way that she involves them in all aspects of the school's work. The senior leadership team shares her passion for developing enthusiastic and independent young learners. Teachers are eager to take advantage of the many training opportunities to improve their practice and to share new ideas. The school has good tracking procedures that are used increasingly well by teachers to identify children who are not achieving as well as they might. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and for assessing how well pupils learn are effective. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate, but the recording of key judgments and areas for development are clouded by too much detail. Action plans are based on a thorough audit of performance, identify the correct priorities, but do not always precisely describe intended outcomes, nor contain clear arrangements for checking the impact of major initiatives. Governors are very supportive and ambitious for the future of the school. They understand the school's strengths and areas for development, and challenge teachers to sustain and improve high levels of performance.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for your friendly welcome when we came to inspect your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and seeing how very well you all get on together. We think that you go to a good school and that your teachers are providing you with a good quality education.

We thought that all the corridors and classrooms were really inviting and stimulating, and were very impressed by how well you look after each other and carry out all your responsibilities. Our discussions with you at lunchtime, during lessons and around the school were very helpful. You speak highly of your teachers and obviously make the most of the time that you are in Wadworth. We are very pleased to see how well you attend school - well done! In all classes you are eager to work hard and do your best. You know a lot about healthy and safe lifestyles, and you behave really well at all times.

You told us how much you enjoyed your lessons and the many art, music and sporting activities, inside and outside of school hours. We agree that your teachers and assistants plan fun and stimulating learning experiences. The standards that you reach in English, mathematics and science, by the time you leave school in Year 6, are rising. We have asked your teachers to now make sure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are helped to improve their writing skills. We have also asked your teachers to check more closely just how well the many activities going on in school are helping you to learn. You can help by continuing to work hard and by achieving all the targets that are set for you.

We very much hope that you continue to enjoy your time at Wadworth.