

Willesborough Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118371
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	339209
Inspection dates	1–2 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Wendy Forbes

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	469
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Botfield
Headteacher	Michael Smith
Date of previous school inspection	8 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including 175 responses to parental questionnaires.

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

- the progress made, and standards achieved by pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, particularly in writing and mathematics
- how effectively teaching and the curriculum met the needs of all learners, particularly the most able
- the support for the more vulnerable pupils, particularly those with special educational needs
- the effectiveness of assessment strategies, marking and pupil tracking systems in raising achievement across the whole school
- how effective leaders and managers at all levels have been in driving up standards in writing and mathematics.

Information about the school

This is a large junior school, with single-aged classes. Almost all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds, with the rest representing a range of other ethnic groups. The current proportion of pupils with special education needs is below the national average and includes those with moderate learning and emotional and social difficulties. On-site wrap-around child care is provided by the school both before and after the school day. The school has received a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Quality Mark for Basic Skills, Activemark, Platinum Travel Plan, and Primary Languages Bronze.

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

Main findings

At the heart of this good school is the drive and determination of the headteacher, well supported by staff and governors, to provide the best possible education for its pupils. This it does very effectively. The school is brimming with happy, hardworking, well-motivated pupils striving to achieve the best they can. The priority the school gives to good academic standards is balanced well by an equal desire to ensure that pupils are well prepared to be citizens of tomorrow. Parents value the school's efforts to provide high quality pastoral care as well as the good range of extra facilities provided, such as the school's breakfast club and after-school care.

Good teaching and a well planned curriculum are significant factors in ensuring pupils make good progress. This good progress continues from Year 3 to Year 6 so that by the time pupils leave school, standards are high in English, particularly in reading, and in science and above average in mathematics. Attainment in mathematics and writing is rapidly improving year on year, due to the use of specialist programmes to support learning and setting arrangements. However, these programmes have not brought about the same rate of improvement when compared to reading and science. Standards in many other subjects, including information and communication technology, and music are above national expectations. Pupils use information and communication technology confidently, as seen in one Year 5 lesson where pupils were observed using a desktop publishing program to create and manipulate shapes to build room spaces.

The school provides well-tailored support for pupils with special educational needs, with the result that many make good progress from their starting points. Teaching assistants ensure that pupils' needs are well supported. The progress of all pupils is tracked rigorously by the school, ensuring that appropriate support is put in place for those that are identified as in danger of falling behind. Teachers know their pupils well and usually plan well for their needs. However, not all teachers use target-setting, assessment and feedback strategies consistently. Consequently, not all pupils, particularly the most able, fully understand how to improve their work. Pupils' outstanding behaviour and extremely positive attitudes to learning promote high expectations throughout the whole school community. Pupils' good attendance and punctuality reflect their desire to be at school. School self-evaluation is honest and accurate and, as a result, leaders set appropriately challenging whole-school targets. Information about progress towards targets is used well to monitor and improve standards, for example in writing, with positive effects on pupils' achievement. The school has developed local and national links well, but is aware of the need to make links with schools that reflect the diverse nature of multi-cultural

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Britain, as this omission limits and restricts the multi-cultural aspect of pupils' otherwise good spiritual, moral and social development. Governors work in very close partnership with the headteacher and staff and provide a good balance of both support and challenge. The shared commitment and desire to succeed reflect the school's continuing good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics and writing by:
- ensuring that all pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils, are provided with tasks that are sufficiently challenging and more closely matched to their levels of ability
- improving the quality of feedback so that pupils know and understand their next steps to learning.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the diverse nature of British multi-cultural society by:
- making links with schools and communities that reflect the diverse nature of multi-cultural Britain

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Lessons observed by inspectors showed that pupils develop exceptional learning habits and attitudes as they move through the school and achieve well by the age of 11. Pupils value learning, are eager to do well, and collaborate willingly. As many pupils remarked '...every day there is something fun to do...teachers make sure we try our best...' In an outstanding mathematics lesson seen in Year 6 where pupils were asked to recognise and extend number sequences, the needs of every single pupil were addressed, supported and rewarded, ensuring that every pupil enjoyed and achieved their absolute very best. In the majority of lessons, pupils listened attentively, responded keenly to teachers' questions, participated in discussions and many expressed their points of view clearly and with confidence. However, in a few mathematics, English and science lessons seen, the pace and challenge of the lesson, particularly for the most able, were slower. Consequently, these pupils did not achieve as much as they could.

Attainment has continued to rise year on year, mostly significantly in English. In 2009 national tests for Year 6, pupils made good progress from their starting points. More than 66% of all pupils achieved a higher level in reading, and almost 80% achieved age-expected levels in English and mathematics combined.

Although mathematics and writing attainment at the end of Year 6 is not as high as in English and science, the school's data and inspectors' observations of pupils' work showed that a number of initiatives are helping to accelerate pupils' progress. Setting in mathematics and intensive personalised support ensures that pupils with special educational needs make consistently good progress from their starting points. Good outcomes in English and mathematics, pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and the good progress they make, all help to ensure that pupils are well prepared for their secondary education.

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Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen in their friendships and sensitive support for each other. Behaviour is outstanding throughout the school, characterised by politeness, a strong sense of fairness and respect for fellow pupils and adults alike. Pupils say that bullying is a rare occurrence.

Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and many say how much they enjoy the activities the school provides to help them keep and stay fit. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know that teachers will help and support them with any worries they may have. The work of the school council is valued by everyone as seen by the suggestion box brimming with ideas and suggestions from pupils across the school. Year 6 pupils enjoy many opportunities to help others by taking on roles as house captains, 'Green Team' members and/or playground buddies. Pupils are enthusiastic about the opportunities to forge links in the wider community by taking part in festivals at the local church or visiting homes for the elderly.

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	2
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	1
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?

Good teaching engages and motivates pupils, with the result that they make good

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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progress and achieve at least above average and sometimes high standards in many subjects. Teachers' high expectations of pupils and their very good relationships ensure a strong work ethic throughout the school, resulting in a general enthusiasm of pupils to do their best.

Pupils have learning targets for improvement and are beginning to be involved in the assessment of their own learning. Although work is regularly marked, there is inconsistency in the quality of feedback so that not all pupils understand how to further improve their work.

Although teachers' good subject knowledge and their understanding of pupil needs ensures they plan well, not all teaching consistently challenges pupils, particularly the most able, in writing and mathematics. As a result, the attainment of these pupils is not as high as it could be. Teachers are skilled in their use of information and communication technology, both in preparing their lessons and in the use of interactive whiteboards as a tool for introducing new learning and demonstrating skills and techniques. Pupils are enthusiastic in their learning and as one pupil said, '...we just get the best of everything here...'

The good curriculum is enriched by improved cross-curricular links and specialist teaching in French, art, sport and music. A good range of extra-curricular clubs, visits, visitors and curriculum-themed weeks such as a multi-cultural week all enhance pupils' learning. The school's good personal, social and health education has a positive impact on the good outcomes for pupils, particularly the promotion of courtesy, good manners, respect and good citizenship, which is clear throughout the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	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?

Leaders and managers have created a widely shared vision which has brought about significant improvement, particularly in attainment, teaching and pupils' progress since the last inspection. Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the school and there is an effective plan for further development to which all staff contribute. The use of pupil assessment data and monitoring information helps the school to set challenging targets. However, this has not ensured that all pupils, particularly the most able, reach their full potential, especially in writing and mathematics. The school has made good progress towards identifying and establishing improvements, to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity to achieve their full

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potential.

Governors are supportive of the school's work and play an active role in the strategic planning of school, providing both support and challenge. Exceptionally well developed support systems within the school are complemented by a wide range of partnerships to support the needs of vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs, ensuring that the needs of all pupils are appropriately addressed. Measures for safeguarding pupils are excellent and all statutory requirements relating to child protection are met.

The school has developed satisfactory provision for global and cultural development within its community cohesion policy. Links with the local and international communities, for example with Malawi, are well developed. However, pupils' understanding of schools and communities in Britain is less well developed, but the school already has plans to rectify this position.

Despite facing a potential falling roll in the area, the school maintains its ambition and drive, which has resulted in continuing improvements in pupil outcomes year on year. Prudent financial management and astute targeting of resources has ensured the school gives good value for money.

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	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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents are supportive of the school, particularly in the way it motivates their child and promotes excellent behaviour. Parents or carers who returned

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questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team were overwhelming positive about the school and its impact on their child's learning and well-being. Many parents wrote positively about the school and its work. One typical example is: 'I think Willesborough Junior School is a very good, well run school and my child has never been happier at school...' Parents particularly appreciated the excellent pastoral care and support the school provides. Parents' and carers' views reflect the inspection findings. A small number of parents expressed individual concerns about aspects of the school. Inspection evidence shows that a few parents would like more information about how well their child is progressing and increased opportunities to express parental views. The school is reviewing these arrangements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Willesborough Junior 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 175 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 469 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	83	48	86	49	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	100	57	70	40	3	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	53	30	102	58	10	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	29	108	61	6	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	34	103	59	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	32	107	61	8	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	63	36	100	57	6	3	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)	58	33	105	60	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	51	29	105	60	7	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	30	106	61	5	3	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	18	113	65	9	5	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	58	33	104	59	4	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	76	43	93	53	4	2	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



5 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Willesborough Junior School, Ashford TN24 0JU

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We were delighted to meet so many of you, including the new School Council, Year 6 pupils and the many other pupils who gave up part of their lunchtime to speak to us. We were very impressed by your politeness and excellent behaviour and particularly delighted to hear your lovely singing in assembly. I am delighted to tell you that you go to a good school. There are many things that are super about your school.

- Your behaviour is excellent and the positive way you all work so well together.
- The high standards you reach in your work, particularly in reading and science.
- Most of you work really hard in lessons and meet high expectations.
- You really enjoy your learning and the fun activities which your teachers plan for you.
- You really enjoy taking part in extra clubs the school organises for you.
- Your headteacher and all other teachers, teaching assistants, staff and governors are determined to give you the best education possible.

While your school is good, there are some things that the school could do better. We have asked you school leaders to:

- find ways to make sure that those of you who sometimes find parts of mathematics and writing lessons a bit too easy are challenged to reach even higher standards
- make sure that you all know and understand how to improve your work
- help you to find out more about different lifestyles in Britain as well as in other parts of the world.

We really loved being in your school and hope that you will continue to work hard and enjoy everything your school offers.

Yours faithfully

Wendy Forbes

Lead inspector

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