

Wymeswold Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120174
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	327218
Inspection dates	8 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	95
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	11
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny McBean
Headteacher	Becky Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	13 December 2005
School address	Brook Street Wymeswold Loughborough Leicestershire LE12 6TU
Telephone number	01509 880561
Fax number	01509 889362

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- how well senior staff recognised strengths and relative weaknesses in the school and dealt with the weaknesses
- the impact of efforts made to raise standards and improve achievement.

Evidence was gathered from data on current standards and achievement; examination of pupils' work and school documents; observation of lessons; and discussions with the headteacher, chair of governors, staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments of these areas, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Reception class from several nursery and playgroup settings. Children have levels of skills just above those expected for their age when they start Reception. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds and no pupil is in the early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average.

The headteacher is new, having been appointed in September 2008 from within the school. Most other staff are new, having joined the school at the same time.

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 good school. The pupils achieve well and reach above average standards. Parents think highly of the school and of, in particular, the welcoming environment of the school, the friendliness of staff and the wide range of activities provided, 'from comic clubs, to street-dance and football'.

The school is well led and managed by staff at all levels. The direction for improvement from the headteacher is especially good, although there are some variations among other staff, as some are new to the school and have limited management experience. The school is working with determination to develop leadership and management skills so that everyone in positions of responsibility is effective in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and contributing to its improvement. The headteacher's evaluation of the school's work is accurate and shared with all staff. Staff are supportive and are working hard to make sure that the strategies to improve standards and achievement are effective. Governors play an important part in the school's development. They are well informed, take an active part in improvement planning and provide good challenge for the headteacher. Improvements in the EYFS for outdoor provision have been slow, but are now close to fruition. They are part of a wider building programme for the main school that is now finalised, and with earmarked funds. The improvements are intended to be started during the current school year. The school has dealt successfully with the issues from the previous inspection, standards have risen since that time, and it is well placed to continue its improvement.

There have been some recent fluctuations in achievement and standards. Some of the most able pupils have not done quite as well in writing or science as they could do. The end of Key Stage 2 mathematics results have not been high enough, although the most able pupils did well. The school analysed the reasons for this accurately and introduced a wide range of strategies right from the start of this term to deal with all of these issues. However, it is too early to measure the impact of these strategies. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because support, from teachers in particular, is good. Learning support assistants make a sound contribution to pupils' progress and this is improving rapidly because the school is providing effective training and support to improve their skills.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their enthusiasm for all aspects of school life and above average attendance. They enjoy the very wide range of activities offered and the way that teachers help them with their learning. They behave well. They even remind themselves that they should be working when their attention wanders, if on infrequent occasions the teacher does not check on them when they are working independently or in small groups. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy through a good diet and regular exercise, although the snacks they bring to school do not always show that! They make a positive contribution to the school and local community, learning to respect and understand other people's views well. They help each other. For example, older pupils act as 'buddies' to younger ones and are keen to express their views through the school council. Around the school grounds and in school pupils behave safely, with due regard for each other and adults. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of their own culture and the

importance of Christian values and a sound understanding of other cultures and values of people in Britain today. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

Teachers use assessment information well to make sure that work is well matched to pupils' needs. Teaching is good and lessons are challenging, with a wide range of learning activities and many opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and to express their understanding. This is helping them to improve their writing and to use an increasingly wide vocabulary. Most lessons are conducted at a good pace. Support for pupils is sound and improving rapidly as learning assistants improve their skills to help pupils develop their writing and numeracy skills. Pupils' behaviour is generally managed well. Marking is often good, giving clear indications of how well pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve. However, occasionally the opposite is true and marking does not give enough information on achievement and how pupils might improve, and also misses opportunities to check whether pupils have followed any advice given. Nevertheless, pupils are confident and enjoy their learning, and the very good relationships between adults and pupils contribute well to this.

The curriculum is well planned, providing many links between subjects that reinforce and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. New materials have been added to focus on improving literacy and numeracy and more recently to support investigative work in science. Pupils are encouraged to be creative and imaginative. For example, they have been encouraged to design machines to solve a problem, based on the style of Heath Robinson. There is an excellent range of visits, visitors, activity weeks and links with local secondary schools that enrich pupils' experience. The out-of-school activities are particularly good, with clubs in sports, singing, dance, chess and drama in which there is a very high level of pupil participation.

The school has thorough procedures to ensure pupils' safety, and supervision of pupils in all activities is good. The quality of care is particularly good and based on excellent relationships and effective relationships with homes, external agencies and other schools. It is a caring school with a strong Christian ethos in which pupils thrive. The quality of academic guidance is satisfactory overall. However, pupils do not always know what their targets are or how to achieve them, and marking does not consistently give the guidance that pupils need to improve their work.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make sound progress in the Reception class and by the time they enter Year 1 reach above average levels of attainment. In particular, their personal and social skills develop well. They work and play together well, treating each other and adults with respect and are happy, confident learners. This is because staff create a happy and caring environment, giving children just the right amount of help but also encouraging them to be independent, for instance, to choose their own activities.

There are effective links with parents and the local playgroup and these help the children to settle quickly. Teachers and teaching assistants have established effective procedures to ensure that care and welfare have a high priority and this is evident in the confidence with which children approach adults and the relationship between staff and parents. Occasionally activities and resources are not challenging enough to

extend children's thinking and learning. For example, staff reinforced the terms 'long' and 'short' in mathematical and creative activities but most of the children could already arrange items from shortest to longest using the correct mathematical vocabulary.

Despite the school's best efforts to ensure children experience outdoor activities, the present outdoor area is inadequate. It does not provide sufficient challenge in developing children's physical skills. However, the school is now in a position to move forward on this. Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The newly appointed teacher for early years is enthusiastic and eager to improve the provision and is well supported by the headteacher.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the provision for children in EYFS, especially the outdoor learning area, in order to quicken their learning and development.
- Make sure that pupils know their targets and what they need to do to reach them, and that marking helps by giving them clear guidance.
- Make sure that the pace of pupils' learning is not interrupted, by keeping a close check on how they are working during independent and group activities.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/or disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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

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.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

9 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Wymeswold Church of England Primary School, Loughborough LE12 6TU

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We spoke to many of you and you told us a lot about how much you enjoy your school and what it is like. You were really helpful.

These are the main things I found out about your school.

- You are at a good school. Teaching is good and lessons are interesting. You make good progress and reach above average standards.
- The headteacher and staff know what the school needs to do to become even better than it is now. She, the staff and governors are working hard to make sure that happens.
- You enjoy school and part of this is because everyone gets on so well together. You take good care of each other and respect each other's opinions.
- The school provides a very wide range of out-of-school activities and the way you take part in them is very good.
- Your understanding of what you have to do to stay healthy is good. You take on responsibilities readily and this prepares you well for your future lives.
- The school is safe and secure and staff are always looking at ways to make it even safer.

To improve things we have asked the school to do the following:

- Improve the provision for children in the Reception class, especially the outside learning area, so that they make faster progress.
- Make sure that you know how well you are doing, what you need to do to improve your work and that marking tells you how to do it.
- Make sure that you do not become distracted from your work when working alone or in small groups.

You can help by trying not to be distracted from your work, and if you think you could do better than you are doing, ask an adult to tell you how. You could also try bringing healthy snacks to school!

With best wishes

Ted Wheatley
Lead inspector