

Wilberforce Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	101114
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	376511
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2012
Lead inspector	Richard Potts

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	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Antrobus
Headteacher	Michael Larkin
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 November 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Richard Potts	Additional inspector
Karen Giles	Additional inspector
Theresa Mullane	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 20 lessons taught by 16 teachers, and meetings were held informally with parents and carers. Further meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, with pupils and with members of staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including self-evaluation documents, strategic plans, information on pupils' progress and other development plans. Inspectors scrutinised 50 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with those returned by pupils.

Information about the school

Wilberforce Primary School is larger than average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery. The overwhelming majority of pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly from Black African and Bangladeshi heritages. Most of these pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with disabilities or those with special educational needs is above average. A higher than average proportion of pupils enter or leave the school during each year. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school runs a breakfast and after-school club each day. In September 2011, an interim headteacher was appointed to the vacant headship of the school and is currently supporting the school. A substantive headteacher has been appointed, who will take up the post from September 2012.

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	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils’ achievement.
- This school is not satisfactory because pupils’ achievement in English and mathematics is inadequate. Although improving, the gap between attainment in this school and the standards attained nationally is not closing fast enough. Attainment at the end of Year 6 was significantly below average in 2009 and fell further in 2010. Although improved, it remained significantly below average in 2011, especially in mathematics. From the evidence of work in pupils’ books and what they do in lessons, standards remain below the national average. Despite a sharp improvement in their rate of progress during this school year, most pupils are working at levels that are below average in English and mathematics. They have not made enough progress from their starting points.
- Teaching is now satisfactory and improving. Improvements this school year, especially in the quality and use of assessment information and teaching plans, mean that work is now better matched to pupils’ learning needs. Such improvements, alongside more interesting lessons, has resulted in the recent rapid rise in pupils’ progress. Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. The few incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with effectively. Attendance is in line with the national average. Pupils’ social development is good and older pupils carry out their duties responsibly.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Under the inspirational leadership of the interim headteacher, the senior and middle leaders, together with the governing body, have begun to establish systems and procedures to improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to address a legacy of

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underperformance. The curriculum provides opportunities for breadth in learning, but lacks rigour in promoting pupils' basic skills, especially in reading and in supporting pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To improve pupils' achievement, make all teaching at least good by:
 - ensuring a closer match between the level of work provided and the learning needs of all pupils, so all are challenged
 - raising the expectations of all staff, so that they are clear about what each year group should be achieving in reading, writing and mathematics
 - implementing a more structured approach to building the language skills of those pupils learning English as an additional language
 - broadening the range of strategies that pupils, particularly middle and lower attainers, use in their reading, so that they become more independent as learners.

- Make the leadership and management of the school good or better by ensuring that:
 - with immediate effect, leaders at all levels monitor more precisely the impact of initiatives and use this information to drive forward improvement in the quality of teaching
 - governors establish more effective procedures to hold the school rigorously to account for achieving the targets it has set itself.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Throughout the school, pupils are not working at the level expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Before the beginning of the current school year, the rate at which pupils made progress was inconsistent, so that the gap between their attainment and that expected of pupils of a similar age nationally was not closing. In Key Stage 2, the gap was widening so that in reading and mathematics, pupils were, on average, a whole year behind where they should have been. These gaps are now beginning to close. Of those responding to the questionnaire, around one in every eight parents felt that their child was not making sufficient progress.

Weaknesses in pupils' reading inhibit their learning. Across the school, but especially in Key Stage 2, many higher attaining pupils read with fluency and confidence, but this is not consistent. Middle and lower attaining pupils have not developed a range of strategies to help them to sound out unknown words, so that their independence as readers and learners is restricted. As a result, pupils' attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is below average. A lack of structured support for pupils learning English as an additional language limits their ability to understand instructions, which adversely affects the progress they make.

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Since the beginning of this school year, wide-ranging changes to the way pupils learn, such as girls-only mathematics lessons, have brought about a dramatic rise in rates of progress. Most pupils are given work that consolidates and builds on their previous learning and, as a result, pupils are increasingly able to use their skills to become better learners. Many, particularly the higher attainers, are rapidly making up ground in their reading, writing and mathematical knowledge, with a few pupils making up a year's deficit in their learning in a term. All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are making increasingly rapid progress. The proportion attaining age-related levels is increasing and they are becoming better prepared for the next stage of their learning. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are well supported and make good progress across all areas of learning from their starting points, which are considerably lower than typically seen in children of this age.

Quality of teaching

Since September, an increasing proportion of teaching is good, although too much remains satisfactory. Although inspectors judged teaching to be satisfactory, they recognise that inadequacies in teaching in the past have had a negative impact on pupils' achievement. Most parents and carers are satisfied with the quality of teaching in the school.

Systems are improving across the school. Accurate, regular assessment enables teachers to intervene effectively to boost progress. In the better lessons, assessment is used effectively to set targets and to plan work. Lesson objectives are routinely shared with pupils, who are encouraged to evaluate their own performance. Most pupils know the level at which they are working and what their next learning target is, although a few are not always confident about how to achieve it. Where teachers' confidence in how pupils learn is strong, imaginative and stimulating lessons generate good learning. In one class where progress has risen sharply, a mathematics lesson on 'mode', 'median' and 'mean' was enlivened by the effective use of the interactive whiteboard. The teacher related the work to pupils' own experiences, through providing a series of increasingly demanding tasks and by the skilful use of questioning that challenged and extended pupils' understanding.

Such teaching is not sufficiently widespread and, where teaching is less effective, teachers do not drive learning forward at a pace fast enough to ensure good progress. There is an over-reliance on adult direction, leading to too few opportunities for pupils to develop independence and take the initiative for their learning. Challenge for certain pupils is not as great as it should be. In some aspects of provision, notably in reading and in the support of pupils learning English as an additional language, pupils' progress is inhibited by the lack of a structured and systematic approach to developing their skills. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are supported extensively, although this support is not always targeted well enough to their particular needs. Occasionally, too much intervention from adults prevents pupils from completing tasks independently.

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Although the curriculum is appropriately broad and enriched by a suitable range of visits and club activities, these are not always used to the best effect to support learning in the classroom. Where teaching is good, such opportunities are used well and have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is good because teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn. They plan lessons that engage the children's interest and enable them to explore and develop understanding. For example, a lesson on mini-beasts generated a great sense of enjoyment and fascination, leading to good social and spiritual development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The inspection found that Wilberforce is an inclusive, safe and nurturing community, a feature noted in the questionnaires of parents and carers. Behaviour around the school and in the playground is orderly. No exclusions have taken place in the current school year.

Pupils are unfailingly polite to visitors and mature in their attitudes to their peers. In general, all groups socialise well together. Older pupils act as mentors and friends for the younger pupils and support charitable events which make a good contribution to their social development. The caring ethos of the school and lessons which encourage pupils to reflect on helping those less fortunate enhance their moral development. When they are interested in their tasks, pupils listen to their teachers attentively. When given the opportunity, they work well independently and also in groups. When the work is uninspiring or lacks sufficient challenge, the behaviour of a few pupils deteriorates. About a sixth of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that poor behaviour sometimes disrupts lessons.

Pupils understand that bullying may take many forms, including that based on race, religion and belief, but are less familiar with the idea of cyber-bullying. They say there is very little bullying. Where bullying does occur, it takes the form of harassment and any concerns are dealt with swiftly. Pupils say that behaviour is good. Strategies for managing behaviour and dealing with the very few incidents of bullying are robust and consistent. Procedures to promote attendance are effective, so that figures have risen sharply to be in line with the national average.

Systems for supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are satisfactory, with appropriate communication with parents and carers and external agencies. Adults provide effective support to those pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, and are suitably trained to meet their needs.

Leadership and management

Although the previous inspection judged leadership and management to be good, a

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series of events left the school without adequate leadership for some time. These events had a detrimental impact on strategic planning, staff morale and the effectiveness of the school's day-to-day operation. Senior and middle leaders were unable to translate their analysis of achievement and provision into viable plans for whole-school development. Other weaknesses included: a lack of rigour in assessment procedures and inaccurate tracking of pupils' progress; some inequality for different groups, notably the girls and the higher attainers; and inaccurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness. As a result, pupils' achievement declined.

Galvanised by support from the local authority, the governing body took decisive action to re-structure its work and appointed interim and substantive headteachers able to reverse the school's decline. The governors are now holding the school to account more effectively. Nevertheless, their monitoring procedures are developing and are not comprehensive enough to rapidly identify any slippage in the school's performance. Under the determined and skilled leadership of the interim headteacher, a more focused approach to teaching and learning has enabled all pupils to make accelerated progress, while some have made exceptional progress and are now working at the expected levels for their age. Pupils in danger of underachieving, such as those learning English as an additional language and girls in mathematics, are identified and supported increasingly well. This reflects the school's satisfactory and growing capacity to promote equality and tackle discrimination. Robust systems now underpin monitoring by senior and middle leaders. These ensure that evaluation of the school's performance and identification of the next steps forward are broadly accurate. However, the skills of leaders at different levels are variable in checking how well initiatives are working and in leading improvements.

Despite past difficulties, pastoral support has been maintained and the school's reputation as a caring and supportive community remains intact with most parents and carers. Pupils' welfare remains proudly and appropriately at the heart of the school's work. Teachers make effective use of the environment, visits and visitors to enrich pupils' experiences and to promote their cultural development satisfactorily. Connections with a school in Chile, coupled with Spanish lessons, provide pupils with a broader awareness of cultural diversity. Overall, a broad, balanced curriculum meets pupils' learning needs and promotes their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development satisfactorily.

Procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare meet government requirements. Governors have established suitable procedures to oversee the safety of the school site and all responsible adults have been appropriately trained to ensure the pupils' well-being.

Despite the improvements, deficits in pupils' learning have yet to be fully addressed. The school acknowledges that pupils' reading skills and the support provided to pupils learning English as an additional language need to be improved. Unified by a clear vision, sense of purpose and determination to improve, underpinned by increasingly effective systems, all members of staff now form a cohesive team with strong capacity to continue the improvement.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



16 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wilberforce Primary School, London W10 4LB

Thank you for your friendliness and help during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting all of you and talking to you about your school and your work. A special thanks to those of you who read to me.

We do not think your school is giving you a good enough education. As a result, your school is being given a 'notice to improve' because it is not doing as well as it should be. This means that it will have regular visits from inspectors to help it to improve.

Your school takes good care of you and your behaviour is satisfactory. You are thoughtful and take your responsibilities seriously. You enjoy your lessons, but you are not learning as well as you should, especially in English and mathematics, because the teaching has not been good enough for some time. Your interim headteacher is beginning to make things better for you, but he has not yet had enough time to make a lasting difference. Your school must make some improvements to ensure that all of you learn as well as you can.

I have asked those in charge of the school to make sure that:

- teachers give you work that is neither too easy nor too difficult, but challenges you to make better progress
- teachers show you a variety of different ways to read difficult words, so you do not always need to ask if you get stuck
- teachers provide more help to those of you who are learning English as an additional language
- the staff who are in charge of different areas of the school's work are all equally effective in what they do
- the school's governors check your progress more carefully so the school achieves its improvement targets and you achieve yours too.

You can help the school to improve by making sure that you always rise to the challenges your teachers set. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Richard Potts
Lead inspector

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