

Wakefield Sandal Magna Junior and Infants School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108214
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	356321
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Rajinder Harrison

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	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Dorothy Wightman
Headteacher	Mrs Julia Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	3 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons taught by 12 teachers and looked at pupils' work in different classes. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including: safeguarding policies and procedures, the school's tracking data of pupils' progress, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning as well as 42 questionnaires from parents and carers and questionnaires from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Do all groups of pupils make at least satisfactory progress through each key stage?
- Whether the school does all that is reasonable to secure better attendance?
- How effectively teaching, assessment and the curriculum serve the needs of all pupils, particularly those who join the school part way through their primary education.
- Whether the school's monitoring, evaluation and development planning procedures are sufficiently rigorous in securing and sustaining improvement?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, at around 80%, is high. While the vast majority of these pupils are of Pakistani origin, the school has an increasing number of pupils of Eastern European origin. The proportion of those who speak English as an additional language is above average. A high percentage of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The school has a higher than average proportion of children from the Traveller community. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also above average. Pupil numbers have grown by over 12% since the previous inspection. A high number of pupils join the school at different stages of their primary education. A few of those who join, particularly in Key Stage 2, have had little or no previous schooling.

The school has Healthy Schools Status, the Eat Well Award, the Activemark and Eco-Green Flag Award.

The school moved into new buildings in August 2010.

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

This is a good school that serves its community well. Pupils from diverse social, cultural and racial backgrounds integrate well because the school successfully promotes harmonious relations. It is a calm place where pupils feel safe and valued. Those who face challenging circumstances in their lives know that the school will help them with their learning and enjoyment of school. Pupils like school 'because teachers are kind and help you'. Their good achievement shows that they value learning and try their best. Most parents ensure that their children attend school regularly. Pupils' positive attributes ensure that they are prepared for the next stage of their education satisfactorily.

Pupils of all backgrounds and starting points achieve well. Children make an excellent start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage where provision for their learning needs is outstanding. In Years 1 to 6, careful assessments and planning enable pupils, to make good and sometimes outstanding progress and as a result their attainment rises rapidly. The attainment of pupils who start at the school in their early years and stay at the school improves the most. More-able pupils make outstanding progress in Years 5 and 6 where the teaching is always at least good. As a result, this group of pupils generally attains above-average standards. Those who start with little or no English in Key Stage 1 or earlier make good gains and attain broadly average levels in all subjects. The large numbers of pupils that join part way through their education make good progress. However, these pupils do not always have enough time to develop the vocabulary and literacy skills required to attain average levels and catch up with other pupils. Well-considered interventions to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities ensure they achieve well. Effective action to improve the attendance of the vast majority of pupils has had a significant impact on pupils' achievement. However, the poor attendance of a small minority of pupils is still an issue, particularly at Key Stage 2, and hinders their progress. While attainment overall remains low, it has improved significantly since the last inspection.

Lessons are generally lively and interesting. Teachers understand pupils' differing needs well and plan lessons to suit. Pupils have individual targets and generally know what they have to do to improve their work though inconsistencies in the way teachers mark work mean that some pupils do not have the same detailed information to help them as others. Highly skilled teaching assistants, including some who are bi-lingual, provide effective support. The curriculum, with good enrichment activities is well-organised. It promotes pupils' good understanding of healthy lifestyles and encourages them to respect and value the cultures and beliefs of others in their community. Opportunities to understand diverse communities further afield in Britain and in other countries are limited. The governing body, while supportive of school leadership, is not involved enough in monitoring the work of the school, for example in ensuring that staff and governors have the training they

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need to further improve outcomes for pupils and that school policies are always implemented consistently.

School leaders identify and tackle development priorities effectively. The school accommodates the changing nature of its community and the challenges this presents. Self-evaluation is accurate. The increased emphasis on developing pupils' speaking, writing and mental mathematics' skills and closer monitoring of pupils' progress has had a significant impact on their achievement. Procedures to keep pupils safe are secure. In the light of the school's many strengths and pupils' rapidly rising attainment and improving achievement, leaders demonstrate good capacity to improve the school further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that:
 - teaching is consistently good in every class
 - pupils have sufficiently-detailed information to help them improve their work
 - all parents send their children to school regularly.
- Ensure that the governing body monitors the work of the school rigorously and that staff and governors have the training they need to improve outcomes for all pupils.
- Improve pupils' cultural development by providing more opportunities for pupils to learn about, explore and understand communities in different parts of Britain and the wider world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils achieve well because they like school and thoroughly enjoy learning. They try hard, behave well and settle to tasks promptly. Lively discussions help pupils gain confidence as they learn from each other. Occasionally those new to learning to speak English struggle to express their ideas because they do not have the relevant vocabulary. More confident bilingual pupils are quick to help classmates by translating where possible.

Children start school with skills that are overall much lower than those typical for their age. Throughout the school, attainment is rising rapidly as pupils' progress improves. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 1 where the school's strategies to improve pupils' speaking, writing and calculation skills have had significant impact. Pupils in Year 2 are working at broadly average levels in reading, writing and mathematics. High numbers of pupils, many new to speaking English, join the school during Key Stage 2, and do not have enough time to catch up with those who have been at the school longer. Pupils' well-below average levels in English impact on their attainment in science as this relies on pupils having good comprehension skills. Attainment in mathematics is not as low because pupils have sufficient English to work out mathematical concepts well. Pupils achieve particularly well in Years 5 and 6, because their confidence in English has grown and teaching is consistently good in these classes. Overall attainment is improving year on year. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because they are targeted for additional support and have appropriately challenging work. Attendance is improving but the progress of a small minority of pupils, particularly at Key Stage 2, is adversely affected by their poor attendance.

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Pupils respect others by listening sensibly and giving them time to respond, for example, when everyone practises their word-building or mental mathematics skills. Pupils are enthusiastic about keep fit activities and sport. School councillors, play leaders and Eco-leaders take their responsibilities seriously as they help around the school, for example to re-cycle paper and make decisions about the clubs the school provides. Older pupils look after younger ones by making sure they play safely and that minor squabbles are sorted quickly. Pupils talk enthusiastically about community activities such as the crime prevention project to improve their environment and fund-raising activities, for example, to help children in poor countries. They are confident within the community in which they live and recognise that differences should be respected. They have a less secure understanding of what life is like for communities in other parts of Britain.

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	4
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	2
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are planned well, with teachers using assessment information to match work to pupils' needs effectively. Teachers plan interesting activities that engage pupils. For example, in a Year 1/2 literacy lesson, pupils enjoyed putting on 'magic glasses' to imagine exciting settings for their stories. In outstanding lessons, a brisk, purposeful introduction with clear guidance for written tasks motivates pupils exceptionally well. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers direct learning too much thus limiting opportunities for pupils to work independently. In most classes, teachers provide good

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opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas to help them develop their understanding. They make effective use of technology to present information visually. Pupils new to learning to speak English and lower-attaining pupils benefit immensely from this technology. Teachers accommodate the needs of pupils at various stages of learning English well, particularly by involving skilled bilingual staff and pupils effectively. Additional support helps new arrivals settle and access learning quickly. Most pupils receive supportive guidance as to how to improve their work but marking is not always detailed enough, particularly for older pupils.

The curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment of learning and is helping to raise attainment. It is modified well to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or new to learning English. Despite the focus on raising attainment in English and mathematics, staff plan a broad, balanced and increasingly creative curriculum. A high-emphasis on 'learning by doing' particularly benefits pupils who are new to learning English or those who find learning difficult. Activities such as sport, swimming, art and many school clubs extend pupils' skills and interests well. Visitors and visits, such as residential trips make learning come alive and enrich pupils' experiences effectively.

Staff know pupils well and meet individuals' needs effectively, especially for those whose circumstances make them the most vulnerable or who join the school part way through their schooling. Senior leaders ensure learning activities to support them are effective so that they catch up quickly. The school's caring ethos is a key factor in raising pupils' self-esteem, encouraging good behaviour and developing considerate relationships between pupils. The quality and effectiveness of the support for pupils are routinely evaluated and specialists from other agencies consulted to ensure that needs are met well. The school does all it can to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Most, but not all, parents support the school's on-going efforts. Pupils in Year 6 are guided well in preparation for secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

Senior leaders work with staff, parents and others to provide pupils with the education they need to achieve well. The good improvement since the previous inspection reflects the school's commitment to raising attainment and accelerating pupils' progress. Effective teamwork motivates all staff to work hard and expectations of staff and pupils are high. The move into brand new buildings has increased the aspirations of staff, pupils and the community to achieve more. The challenging targets the school set itself in 2010 were

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largely realised and the school's data on the attainment of current pupils reflects continued improvement.

The school improvement plan concentrates on the right priorities. Subject leaders are involved in evaluating the quality of teaching in their subjects and this helps to make teaching increasingly effective. Staff have very comprehensive assessment information regarding the progress expected of each pupil and senior managers monitor progress carefully. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well, for despite the poor attendance of a tiny minority, the vast majority makes good or better progress.

The governing body is supportive in ensuring that the school serves its community well and that community relations remain positive. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory and ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. Requirements for child protection are fully met. Systems for assessing risks are satisfactory. Governors are less rigorous in their monitoring role. For example, they have not checked that staff and governors have had the training they need to carry out their roles more effectively and that all school policies, for example recording playground incidents, are implemented consistently. Good partnerships with parents and carers enable them to support their children's learning well. For example, many attend various workshops and other activities to learn how they can help their children learn at home.

The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. It works hard to help pupils feel comfortable and confident within the local community. Assemblies, recycling projects and 'Fairtrade' activities are used effectively to highlight global issues. However, not enough is done to help pupils understand the diverse nature of British society and Britain's place in the wider world.

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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

A very friendly, cheerful and welcoming learning environment greets children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A high number of children have no pre-school experience. Many speak little, in English or any other language, and very few have been separated from home before. Excellent arrangements to prepare children and their parents before they start school ensure that children settle quickly. Routines are extremely well embedded and expectations of children high. Many children lack independence in, for example going to the toilet, dressing or feeding themselves but staff take very good care of them and identify individual needs very well. Bilingual staff help children gain confidence and participate fully. Staff work very effectively with parents to show them how to help with children's learning at home. They successfully reinforce the need for children to be at school regularly.

Children make outstanding progress from their very low starting points. In the current Reception class children are working at levels expected for their age. This reflects an improving picture of children's attainment at the end of the Reception year. The strong focus on improving counting and calculating skills has been particularly effective this year in ensuring that a higher proportion attains the level expected. The leader and staff have an excellent understanding of children's needs and plan and evaluate activities rigorously. Extensive assessments build a very clear picture of children's achievements and progress. This ensures that children get off to a strong start through: a clear focus on developing speaking and listening skills; sensitive pastoral care and many opportunities to explore new situations independently.

Children flourish in this busy, purposeful setting that provides the key building blocks for their future learning and well-being. They have excellent opportunities to listen and talk. For example, children were not sure what the creature in the glass bowl was but enjoyed talking about the 'fish, shark, crocodile, snake, and frog.' Few had seen a tadpole before but were fascinated by the 'swimming animal with feet and a long, see through tail'. Resources and facilities are outstanding. Extensive use is made of the school and local area to broaden children's experiences particularly in support of their social, emotional and language development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents are very positive and supportive of the school. While few made written comments, many reported that they were confident that their children were happy in school and were

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making good progress. The inspection supports these positive views. The school deals effectively with any issues regarding behaviour and considers parents' views appropriately. A few parents indicated that they would like the school to give parents longer notice of forthcoming events and activities involving their children so they can make appropriate arrangements to attend. The inspection team thinks this is a valid request.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wakefield Sandal Magna Junior and Infants 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	62	16	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	57	18	43	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	52	15	36	3	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	52	19	45	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	45	22	52	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	43	23	55	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	45	23	55	0	0	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)	17	40	22	52	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	40	23	55	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	19	30	71	4	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	21	31	74	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	31	26	62	2	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	43	22	52	2	5	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 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



17 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wakefield Sandal Magna Junior and Infants School, Wakefield, WF1 5NF

Thank you for making us welcome when we inspected your school and for completing the questionnaires for us. We enjoyed our visit and talking to you about life in your school. From the many positive comments you made, we can see that you like your school, are happy there and enjoy learning. Your parents and carers also agree with you and had lots of positive things to say about the school.

Yours is a good school. It is a happy, friendly place where everyone gets on well and treats each other with respect. We were impressed with your behaviour; how much you know about staying safe and fit; how many of you eat the excellent meals the school provides to help you be strong and healthy. You clearly feel safe in school and know that adults look after you well. You have responsibilities, such as organising playground equipment and we can see you take these responsibilities very seriously. You work hard and make good progress in your learning because teaching is good and the work you do is interesting and fun. Those of you who find learning difficult or are new to learning English have the extra help you need to achieve well. We know that most of you come to school every day, but a few of you have too much time off and this is stopping you from achieving more. Children in the Nursery and Receptions classes make an outstanding start to their education.

Your headteacher and the staff are working hard to improve the school to help make further improvements, we have recommended that:

- they should help you do even better, especially in Key Stage 2, by making sure all your lessons are good; that you know how to improve your work and that you all attend regularly.
- governors should monitor the work of the school and check that staff have all the training they need to do everything that they should effectively
- the school does more to help you to learn about the different communities that live in other areas of Britain and in other countries.

You can play your part by making sure you come to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison

Lead inspector

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