

Nascot Wood Junior School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 117311 |
| Local Authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 338989 |
| Inspection dates | 14–15 January 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Denise Morris |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 240 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Lyn Trodd |
| Headteacher | David Holcombe |
| Date of previous school inspection | 14 May 2007 |
| School address | Nascot Wood Road Watford Hertfordshire WD17 4YS |
| Telephone number | 01923 238784 |
| Fax number | 01923 445900 |
| Email address | Head.nascotwoodjm@thegrid.org.uk |

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St. Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed 10 teachers. Sixty per cent of inspection time was spent observing learning. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school policies, governors' minutes, planning documents, pupils' work, and questionnaires returned from 190 parents and carers.

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

- the achievement of higher and lower attaining pupils
- whether teaching is sufficiently challenging for all groups of pupils
- the use of assessment to support learning
- the quality of safeguarding.

Information about the school

Nascot Wood Junior School is average in size. The socio-economic circumstances of many pupils are advantageous. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly specific learning difficulties, is about average.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It has improved significantly since the last inspection. Excellent leadership and management, and in particular the very clear vision of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, have resulted in pupils exceeding their expected targets and sustaining improvement year on year. Leaders at all levels are clearly focused on embedding ambition and driving improvement in all areas of the school. This is evident in the way that the school undertakes exceptionally rigorous self-evaluation to ensure that leaders know how well pupils are doing. Governors provide outstanding support and are equal partners in the drive to maintain high standards. They fully meet their statutory duties. Outstanding care, guidance and support means that the school takes very good care of its pupils and that safeguarding procedures, including child protection procedures, are rigorous and fully meet current government guidelines. A very high percentage of parents who responded to the questionnaire said that they were confident that their child was safe at school. The school has an excellent capacity to continue improving.

Pupils of all abilities achieve very well over their time in school. They make good progress in their lessons and attain high standards. An effective and collaborative approach between teachers and teaching assistants contributes considerably to harmonious relationships in classrooms. Good teaching ensures that pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds achieve equally well. Just occasionally the learning of the highest attaining pupils is not extended quite as well as it could be because questioning does not regularly challenge their abilities by encouraging them to think about their answers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who use English as an additional language achieve better than similar pupils nationally.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their exceptional behaviour in and around the school reflects on their excellent moral and social development. Pupils are polite and friendly to each other and to adults and visitors. Their understanding of how to lead healthy lives is exceptional. The rich and exciting curriculum provides a vast array of activities and tasks to help pupils understand the impact of physical activities and healthy eating on their own lives. As a result a high number of pupils take part in the after-school sports activities and choose healthy foods at lunch times. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and they say that there is absolutely no bullying at the school. As a result of the school's good strategy for community cohesion, pupils have a clear awareness of their own local community and regularly take part in many local activities. They have productive links with a school in Spain,

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which developed as a result of all pupils learning Spanish, but links within the wider UK are more limited. This constrains pupils' multicultural development and their understanding of life in communities that are different from their own.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the range of teachers' questioning techniques to ensure that pupils of all abilities, and particularly those who are most able, are challenged to develop their thinking skills to the fullest extent.
- Make stronger links with pupils in other schools nationally and globally to enhance pupils' awareness of different cultures and lifestyles.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school in Year 3 is above the national average. Nevertheless, they improve their skills so that they attain high standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school in Year 6. Pupils' achievement and enjoyment of their learning are outstanding. They are keen and eager to learn. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make at least good progress in lessons although a few pupils, particularly the most able, are not always challenged through questioning to extend their thinking so that they can aim even higher. Pupils' achievement in sport, art and music is exceptional. Specialist teaching in these subjects and high quality resources are having a very positive impact on pupils' skills. Their successes are evident in the exciting and vibrant art displays around the school and in their compositions in music. For example, some African drumming by a Year 5 class showed outstanding skill, expression and timing as pupils showed excellent enjoyment of their tasks. A 'singer of the year' competition during the inspection showed high levels of skill by those taking part and excellent behaviour and enjoyment by the whole school audience. Pupils behave exceptionally well and are eager to please. This was particularly evident during the inspection when heavy snow restricted any outdoor play. Despite this, pupils engaged themselves at break and lunch times in productive games and activities, working very well together. They really enjoy school, as demonstrated by their excellent attendance. Pupils regularly help in class, undertake simple responsibilities such as collecting registers, helping those younger than themselves and making decisions about how the school works. They work well with the local community and are very well prepared for their future lives. The productive school council has a busy agenda and has worked hard to improve the outdoor play areas. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and know how to keep safe. They regularly take part in local productions, fundraising activities and charity work. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good, although their multicultural awareness is limited by the lack of links with schools and communities in other parts of Britain that are different from their own.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 1 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Purposeful and collaborative working between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that pupils are extremely well supported and that there is equality of provision for the different groups in the school. For example, a group of Year 3 pupils who speak English as an additional language, confidently improved their understanding of scientific vocabulary as they learned the meaning of words such as 'translucent' and 'opaque' during a small group workshop prior to their class lessons on different materials. In another group session, pupils with special educational needs were provided with high quality support as they worked to improve their phonic skills so that they had lots of attention and made good progress. Teachers make effective use of the high quality assessment procedures to monitor each pupil's progress. This enables them to spot any pupil who is falling behind and provide additional support to help them catch up. Lessons are vibrant with pupils fully involved in offering ideas and opinions. There are times, however, when pupils' skills are not extended sufficiently well through questioning. For example, in one science lesson pupils contributed many answers to questions. They found out that 'bigger towels absorb more water'. However, there were missed opportunities to extend their knowledge by asking 'Why?'

Pupils benefit from a rich range of curricular activities that promote good progress and excellent personal development. Older pupils for example talked excitedly about their forthcoming residential trip to the Isle of Wight and other pupils were keen to talk about their successes in sport and drama activities. An excellent example of this was when some Year 5 practised their parts for a production of *Twelfth Night*. They knew the story very well, worked hard to perfect their words and actions and were

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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looking forward to performing it to their parents and others. Exceptionally good care, guidance and support for all pupils ensures that there is always someone for pupils to talk to and that their needs are fully met. Procedures for induction and transition are extremely good because of the very effective partnerships that the school has established with support services and other providers. As a result pupils are prepared very well for the next stage of their education.

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 | 1 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and the deputy headteacher were new to the school at the time of the last inspection. The school has improved in all aspects since that period, and their input is evident in every area of its work. Standards have improved continuously because of their rigorous attention to detail and the driving ambition of all members of the senior leadership team. For example, careful attention and thorough assessment have ensured that pupils’ achievements are carefully monitored. Teaching has improved, although leaders are aware that there is more to do to ensure that high quality challenge through questioning becomes a key feature of all lessons. Governors provide high quality challenge to the leadership team and ensure that pupils are kept fully safe. They are very effective in their promotion of equality and in tackling diversity. The school is developing a good strategy for community cohesion and has some exceptional local links, which enhance provision. Partnerships are a major strength in promoting enrichment and bringing visitors to the school to widen pupils’ horizons. Links with parents are good. International links are developing well and plans have begun to widen links with schools in other parts of Britain.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |

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

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

‘This is an excellent school and my child is happy to go to school every day,’ wrote one parent. ‘We believe that the school provides a good all round education,’ wrote another. The vast majority of parents are supportive of the school and believe that their child is making good progress and is safe at school. A few parents feel that their child does not make sufficient progress and that they do not have enough communication from the school about their child’s progress. Inspection evidence found that all groups make at least good progress in lessons and achieve very well during their time at the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nascot Wood 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 189 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 240 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 113 | 60 | 73 | 39 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 117 | 62 | 68 | 36 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 71 | 38 | 103 | 54 | 10 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 77 | 41 | 93 | 49 | 17 | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 89 | 47 | 85 | 45 | 10 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 65 | 34 | 102 | 54 | 12 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 82 | 44 | 100 | 53 | 5 | 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) | 76 | 40 | 93 | 49 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 79 | 42 | 96 | 51 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 60 | 32 | 113 | 60 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 62 | 33 | 103 | 54 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 74 | 39 | 89 | 47 | 13 | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 107 | 57 | 73 | 39 | 6 | 3 | 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 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 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.



16 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nascot Wood Junior School, Watford, WD17 4YS

Thank you for your help during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting you and hearing all about your activities. This letter is to tell you some of the things we found out about your school.

- Nascot Wood is an excellent school.
- You achieve very well at school. We particularly enjoyed your African drumming and watching you practise for the performance of *Twelfth Night*.
- You enjoy school very much and you attend better than pupils in most other schools. Well done for this.
- You show very good understanding of being healthy. We were very pleased to see that you choose lots of vegetables at dinner-time.
- Teachers provide some exciting activities that help you to make good progress in your lessons but they do not always ask you to think carefully when they ask questions.
- You work very well with other local schools and with a school in Spain, but you do not have enough opportunities to work with pupils in other parts of Britain.
- Your headteacher and other leaders keep you safe at school.

We are asking the school to do two things to make sure you keep up your excellent achievement.

- Make sure teachers ask questions that help you to think and search for answers. You can do your bit to help by thinking carefully before you answer questions.
- Make links with schools in other parts of Britain so that you can learn more about the lives of people in different areas.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Denise Morris
Lead inspector

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