

Wickhambreaux Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118660
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	313033
Inspection date	8 July 2008
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicholas Bushell
Headteacher	Ann Campling
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
School address	The Street Wickhambreaux Canterbury CT3 1RN
Telephone number	01227 721300
Fax number	01227 722 969

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The pupils are predominantly White British, with a very small number from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average and much higher in Years 3 to 6 than elsewhere. The school experiences a significantly higher level of pupil mobility than is found in most schools. As a result, only a few pupils in Year 6 have been in this school for their full primary education. A high proportion of those who enter late have learning difficulties. Relatively few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Pupils' attainment on entry to Reception was below average but has improved in the last two years and is now broadly at the level expected for their age. The school has gained Quality Mark accreditation in relation to several aspects of its work.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Wickhambreaux Church of England Primary is an outstanding school, where pupils of all ages and abilities succeed and thrive. Parents rightly value the exceptional ethos, the commitment to the individual and the outstanding care, support and academic guidance. As one commented, 'I cannot praise the school enough for fulfilling every need in all aspects of my child's development.' Pupils develop really positive attitudes to learning and their personal development is outstanding. Pupils feel exceptionally safe and are confident that adults will help them. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. Their good attendance and outstanding behaviour indicate that they greatly enjoy school.

Pupils' achievement is now outstanding. They get off to a good start in Reception. Children make good progress, with some acquiring skills beyond those expected because of the superbly planned curriculum and highly effective teaching. Planning, assessment and overall provision in the Foundation Stage are good. However, there is scope to increase the proportion of children attaining at the higher levels. Outstanding teaching enables pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with additional learning needs, to make rapid progress, particularly in reading and mathematics, and standards are now above average. Overall standards at Year 6 are broadly average this year, apart from in mathematics, where they are above average. However, outstanding teaching has enabled Year 6 pupils to make exceptional progress. This is in spite of very high pupil mobility, which means that many pupils are not in the school long enough to reach high standards, and a high level of identified learning needs. Writing, although steadily improving, remains a relatively weaker element across the school. However, teachers plan creatively to allow pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills within skilfully integrated topics. The few pupils who do not speak English as their first language make similar progress to the others, once confident in spoken English. Skilled specialist teaching and high expectations contribute well to high standards in science, music and French, and there is rigour and depth in the teaching of these subjects. The outstanding curriculum meets pupils' needs exceptionally well. The school provides extremely well for pupils' individual needs, including those with particular gifts or talents, for whom the school seeks out appropriate opportunities. Pupils enthusiastically support the outstanding range of extra-curricular activities.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides highly effective leadership. School self-evaluation is outstanding. Teachers review pupils' progress rigorously across a range of subjects, implementing support programmes when necessary. Subject leaders have a significant impact on standards. Governors are knowledgeable and effective. The school has outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Reception children receive exceptionally good care. Transition arrangements, when children join the school, are matched carefully to individual needs. Relationships are close and supportive, enabling children to make good gains in their personal and social development. Children relate confidently to each other and have positive attitudes to learning. They have many opportunities to make choices and to initiate activities. Good teaching ensures that children make good progress in most areas of learning. The classroom environment is stimulating and available space is used well. Assessment procedures effectively identify the next steps in learning. The good focus on the shapes and sounds of letters is ensuring increasingly rapid progress in

language. However, children's skills in handwriting and in calculation are slightly less advanced than in other areas. The school recognises that, with an improving intake, expectations of the more able children could be higher so that they learn more rapidly.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils have frequent opportunities to practise their writing skills.
- Challenge the more advanced children in Reception more consistently so that their learning is moved on briskly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children achieve well in Reception and almost all reach broadly average standards, with a few doing even better. They make increasingly rapid progress in Years 1 and 2. With effective teaching, standards at Year 2 are now above average, though better in reading and mathematics than in writing. In Years 3, 4 and 5, pupils achieve at a much faster than expected rate and this is steadily driving up standards. Typically, standards have been higher in Year 6 than in Year 2. However, in 2008 they are broadly average overall – though higher in mathematics. This group has experienced very high mobility and several have identified learning needs and relatively low starting points. However, they have made exceptional progress. As a result, the school believes that they will exceed their expected targets. Achievement and standards, in Year 6 and elsewhere, are particularly high in mathematics, a strength of the school. Outstanding achievement is also underpinned by high quality provision for pupils with additional learning needs and the range, quality and flexibility of support for those identified as gifted. What sets this school apart are the high standards evident across the curriculum. Specialist teaching has a major impact in, for example, science, music, information and communication technology (ICT) and French, where pupils experience subjects in depth and standards are high.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are articulate, friendly and enthusiastic. Their good attendance reflects their enjoyment of school. Behaviour is outstanding, not just because of pupils' outstanding personal qualities, but because they are engaged by an exceptional curriculum, closely tailored to their individual needs. Pupils feel very secure, saying that bullying is rare. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy, reflected both in their awareness of the impact of poor diet and in their support for physical activities. Pupils' moral, spiritual and social development is outstanding. The strong Christian ethos permeates the school's work. However, pupils' engagement with the ethnic and cultural diversity of contemporary Britain is less well developed. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to the school community through the school council, the 'buddy' programme and many classroom 'jobs'. Links with the wider community through the church and through partnership activities with other schools are well developed. Pupils' outstanding progress in basic skills, their awareness of the world of work through visiting speakers, and the opportunity to undertake enterprise activities contribute exceptionally well to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers plan creatively and have high expectations. They motivate pupils exceptionally well, leading to outstanding achievement. Relationships are close and pupils have the confidence to try things out. Thorough checks on pupils' progress ensure that staff are aware of what individual pupils need to do to move forward. Lessons have a brisk pace which moves learning on quickly. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their understanding through the practical application of ideas. A key strength of teaching is the development of pupils' thinking skills. Teachers encourage independence, giving even the youngest pupils good opportunities to record work independently. Marking is generally thorough and, where practice is best, shows pupils how they can improve their work. Pupils are trained to evaluate the quality of their own work. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils with additional learning needs, leading to progress which is often outstanding.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage curriculum covers the areas of learning well. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is extremely rich, provides a considerable amount of 'hands-on' experience and effectively engages pupils' enthusiasm. Rigorous teaching of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through other subjects significantly enriches learning. Stimulating topics, such as recent ICT-based work in 'Weather Watch', support high quality learning in a range of subjects. In addition, outstanding opportunities in, for example, science and music, are greatly enhanced by the deployment of specialist teachers. As a result, standards in music are high and pupils have a rigorous approach to investigative science. Provision for pupils who need additional support is outstanding, enabling them to make impressive progress. The exceptional range of extra-curricular activities has a considerable impact on pupils' personal development and their commitment to school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pastoral care is outstanding. Systems for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being are extremely thorough. Meticulous screening, accurate identification and effective support ensure that those with additional learning needs rapidly make up lost ground. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. Staff know individual pupils extremely well and this ensures that their welfare needs are met, supported by outstandingly effective links with external agencies. Academic guidance is outstanding. There is a flexible system of individual targets in literacy and numeracy, some generated through pupils' evaluation of what they need to do next. These are consistently implemented across the school, although structured appropriately to pupils' ages. Pupils know their targets well and evaluate their progress regularly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has established a cohesive team with a shared commitment to high standards and to pupils' personal development. She is an excellent

role model, sets a clear direction for the school and takes a highly innovative approach, enthusiastically embracing initiatives which will enrich pupils' opportunities. The monitoring of teaching and pupils' work is thorough. Subject leaders are particularly effective, especially when working to their specialism. Overall, the school knows itself very well and self-evaluation is outstanding. Systems for checking on pupils' progress are very thorough and ensure that staff are strongly focused on improving pupils' learning. The governing body effectively fulfils its responsibilities. Governors have a wide range of expertise and know the school well. However, they recognise that they are less secure in challenging school leaders in relation to academic performance. The school has outstanding capacity to improve.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

9 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wickhambreaux C of E Primary School, Canterbury CT3 1RN

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and sharing your worship and lessons. Having looked at all the evidence provided by your headteacher, we found that yours is an outstanding school.

- Our main findings are these:
- Most of you behave outstandingly well in lessons.
- Although standards are broadly average in Year 6, this still represents outstanding progress, given that some of you have found the work quite challenging in the past.
- Much of the teaching is outstanding, and this has helped many of you, particularly towards the top of the school, to make exceptional progress.
- The Foundation Stage is good and provides well for the youngest children.
- The school makes sure that you are cared for exceptionally well, and you are very aware of how important it is to eat healthily and take regular exercise.
- The outstanding curriculum includes many opportunities for you to be actively involved and an exceptional range of out-of-school activities.
- Those in charge of the school make sure that it runs really smoothly and constantly look for new ways to make your learning interesting.

We are asking the school to make these changes so that you do even better:

- Provide frequent opportunities for you to practise your writing skills.
- Ensure that the more advanced children in Reception get really challenging work so that their learning moves on as quickly as possible.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

- George Logan
- Lead Inspector