

Wivelsfield Primary School

South Road, Wivelsfield Green, East Sussex, RH17 7QN

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. They make especially good progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they have excellent attitudes to learning and want to do well. This is also reflected in their high attendance and the excellent promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- The school has worked hard to improve the quality of teaching so that lessons are consistently well taught.
- The strong partnership between the headteacher, senior leaders and governors has secured several improvements in the school.
- Leaders are effective and are clear about what else needs to be done to move the school forward.
- All staff are keen to play their part in building on the strengths of the school and they value the opportunities to build on their own skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in writing at the end of Year 2, especially those who are potentially more able writers, is not as quick as it could be.
- The proportion of teaching which is outstanding is not enough to ensure all pupils are fully stretched.
- Information on pupils' progress is not always used well by all leaders to help support or direct pupils' learning more effectively.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or part lessons. All of the lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspector held meetings with staff, the Chair and three other members of the governing body. The inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority and with an external consultant who supports the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the school council and heard other pupils read.
- The inspector looked at school documentation including development planning, information on pupils' progress, the school's monitoring information, attendance information, governing body documentation, and school policies, including safeguarding information.
- There were 56 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View) which were taken account of during the inspection. The inspector also considered several letters received from parents.
- The inspector took account of the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Sheila Browning, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- Almost all pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.
- There are significantly more boys than girls in most year groups.
- There are five classes all mixed age. In the mornings the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils are taught in single age classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average (pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families).
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and accelerate the rate of progress for all pupils by:
 - consistently challenging all pupils to produce high quality writing at Key Stage 1, especially the more able pupils
 - consistently identifying and sharing among staff the best practice
 - ensuring that all teachers always use well-chosen resources and have clear learning intentions
 - ensuring that all teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils' abilities
 - developing the skills of all leaders so that they use information on pupils' progress more precisely to help them support pupils' learning more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- On entry to the Reception class children's skills are broadly typical for their age except in their early language, writing and reading skills. Children develop these skills quickly because of the many opportunities they have to talk about their activities such as visiting Bodiam Castle as part of their 'Towers and Turrets' topic. They develop good mathematical skills counting out jewels when making crowns and good physical skills when riding the bikes outside. One boy said, 'If you break the rules of the road you'll go to the dungeons!' Children develop good levels of independence and confidence, and this combined with good teaching ensures that children make good progress so that by Year 1 they are above expected levels in most areas of their learning.
- Standards are above average and rising. As pupils move up the school their progress accelerates at a faster rate. School based information on pupils' progress shows that a large majority in the current Year 6 are in line to reach above average standards in English and mathematics. For a few, their mathematics attainment is high.
- The school has worked hard to raise pupils' reading and writing skills to ensure that all have an equal opportunity to succeed. Good teaching of the sounds that letters make helps pupils to write and sound out words.
- Pupils can talk about the main events and characters in stories and the home-school reading partnership means that many read frequently at home and school. Reading levels are above average for many pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Learning is brought alive, for example, when Years 5/6 visited The Globe Theatre in London, as part of their study of Shakespeare's, Twelfth Night. As a result they show a good understanding of the difference between play scripts and other forms of writing.
- Inspection evidence and the school's own checks on pupils' progress show that an increasing number make even better progress than previously. However, not enough pupils reach the higher levels in writing at the end of Year 2, especially those who are more able. This is because opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge them to produce high quality writing.
- The rigorous checks on pupils' progress ensure that any at risks of falling behind are picked up early and interventions and support are put in place. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because the quality of support and extra help are carefully matched to their needs in lessons, in small groups and in one-to-one sessions.
- Pupil premium funding is being used well to employ extra staff to work intensively with these pupils on boosting their reading, writing and mathematics skills. Last year, their attainment in both English and mathematics was approximately six months behind that of other pupils in school in both English and mathematics. However, the intensive support is showing the gap for current pupils is closing rapidly as a result of the well-targeted support.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school has maintained the effective teaching from the previous report, but it is not always consistently at the highest levels. Relationships between pupils and teachers are outstanding.
- Strong teamwork has driven the culture of wanting every child to do well. Lessons are carefully planned. Classrooms are stimulating and well organised with learning prompts and information known as 'working walls' to support daily learning.
- Teachers understand what the pupils need to do to improve although some miss opportunities to stretch the more able writers in Years 1 and 2.
- Marking is regular, usually with helpful comments to improve pupils' work. Most teachers build in time for pupils to respond to these. Pupils are encouraged to 'choose their challenge' where appropriate and they check their own and each other's work using a variety of methods to let the teacher know how well they have understood.
- There are many strengths in teaching: in the best lessons resources are well chosen, learning

intentions are clear, activities well matched to pupils' abilities, and questioning is used effectively to check learning.

- Teachers make learning fun. In a Years 5/6 mathematics lesson pupils collated data on sleep patterns. Effective questioning by the teacher helped the pupils to sort themselves into groups so that they could understand and see which were the largest/smallest groups before creating a chart recording how long they slept.
- Pupils are well supported in their reading through the whole-school programme to improve achievement in reading. This and the information from the Year 1 check on letters and sounds are beginning to help pupils make even better progress in their literacy.
- Adults are used well to support learning in the classroom and in small group and individual support lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The excellent care shown by all staff and strong nurturing atmosphere ensure that pupils are proud to be part of the 'Wivelsfield family'. They are polite and thoughtful; there is no discrimination reported by pupils as everyone's views are valued. Pupils are encouraged to experience every opportunity to develop as well-rounded individuals.
- In lessons pupils work very hard, respond eagerly to questions and work exceptionally well together.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the different forms of bullying, know the dangers of cyber bullying and how to stay safe. They say bullying is very rare but are confident that if it occurred it would be dealt with very quickly. Pupils have worked very hard to help develop the golden rules, rewards and sanctions systems.
- Parents who responded to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire are extremely positive and appreciative of the way the school looks after their children, and say that their children feel safe and are very happy at school.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their responsibilities. Year 6 pupils applied for the post of and trained to be prefects and so help the smooth running of the school. Year 5 pupils enjoyed being trained as play leaders and now lead games and organise equipment at playtimes, as well as helping younger pupils enjoy their playtimes. Pupils raise funds for a school in Sierra Leone with which they exchange letters and send resources, and organise and run stalls and other fund raising events.
- The school councillors and house captains are immensely proud of their contributions and are excellent ambassadors for the school. 'It's great here', 'there's so much to do' and 'we are all friends' were typical comments from pupils reflecting their enthusiasm for the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, governors, staff, pupils and parents work extremely well together to embed the school's vision among its community. Senior leaders and governors support the headteacher's high expectations of teachers and pupils and are committed to his focus on improving teaching, pupils' learning experiences and their enjoyment for learning.
- Robust and accurate self-evaluation underpins the plans for improvement. The headteacher has made many positive changes. He has introduced secure systems to check on pupils' progress. Regular pupil progress meetings help check that pupils' individual learning needs are supported and external advice is sought when necessary.
- This information is used most effectively by senior leaders to pinpoint any pupils at risk of under-performing but other leaders recognise that they are not yet using the information on all pupils' progress precisely enough to move learning on even more quickly. The school ensures equality of opportunity. There is no discrimination. All teachers are held to account and pupils' progress is checked at regular meetings.

- A well-focused staff performance management system is in place. Targets set are based on pupils' progress, attainment and school priorities. Leaders observe lessons, check planning, pupils' work and the learning environment to see how they can be improved. The headteacher has led much of the training for staff development. Senior leaders through their work supporting other schools in the local authority have also helped improve some aspects of teaching. However, the school recognises that the highest quality teaching is not always shared as much as it should be. Additionally, a comprehensive staff training programme is in place although this has not yet secured a greater proportion of outstanding teaching. Teachers know they are accountable and are motivated to work together.
- The school website and 'learning platform' provides parents and pupils with lots of useful information and activities for learning together when at home.
- The attractive school building and flexible curriculum are used effectively to maximise pupils' engagement and meet their needs and interests well. Events such as a sleepover to study the night sky, a visit from an astronomer, a Tudor day, celebrating the Olympics and The Diamond Jubilee, and a residential activity week all enrich learning further. Additionally, there are a wide range of school clubs, visits and visitors.
- The local authority provides 'light touch support' for this school, reflecting its confidence in the school's leadership to continue to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are challenging and knowledgeable about the school. They know its priorities through their first-hand experiences from hearing pupils read to participating in school trips, attending staff training and meetings or working on school development. Governors ensure that statutory duties such as safeguarding are met and that financial resources are managed well. Governors receive good quality information from the headteacher which enables them to robustly check and challenge the school about the standards of teaching and pupils' performance compared to nationally. They are clear about the links between teachers' pay and performance. Governors check that the funding, such as the pupil premium, is used well to support and benefit pupils' achievement. They are committed to see the school improve further and make good use of training to support their development. As one governor said, 'we are a team willing to keep on learning'.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	114424
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	403239

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marion Whear
Headteacher	Jonathan Rowsell
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 November 2007
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