



Wix Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101025
Local Authority Wandsworth
Inspection number 285947
Inspection dates 16–17 October 2006
Reporting inspector Lynn Bappa

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wix's Lane
School category	Community		Clapham Common North Side
Age range of pupils	3–11		London SW4 0AJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02072283055
Number on roll (school)	208	Fax number	02079784942
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Philip Beddows
		Headteacher	Mr Marc Wolstencroft
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	16–17 October 2006	285947

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school serving a disadvantaged community in Wandsworth. Half the pupils are entitled to free school meals. Well over two thirds of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds (the largest groups represented are Black Caribbean and Black African) and the large majority do not speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is just above the national average. The school shares a site with the French Lycand;eacute;e Charles de Gaulle Annexe Wix and is the first state school to run a bilingual, combined curriculum stream. This began in September with one of the two Reception (maternelle) classes and will eventually develop through the age range.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that enables its pupils to achieve well. The school has had many obstacles to overcome recently, including staffing difficulties, falling numbers and problems with the building, and the success of its work since then is evident. In the two years since he was appointed, the headteacher has put effective strategies into place to improve teaching, enrich the curriculum and raise standards. These have been successful.

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress, although quite a number do not reach all the goals set for them by the time they enter Year 1 because of their low starting points. The school is well aware, however, that there is some underachievement in the new bilingual Reception class and has begun to take early and robust action to tackle this.

Standards have improved significantly since last year. In 2005, the results achieved by pupils in Years 2 and 6 were well below average and showed satisfactory but declining achievement. The provisional results for 2006 show that standards have risen and the indications are that they are now broadly average. Inspection evidence confirms that current pupils are making good progress. The school is well on its way to meeting its challenging targets and prepares its pupils well for the next stage of their education.

There is much that is exciting about the work of the school. The curriculum is good and lays the foundations for life-long learning. Pupils participate eagerly in a good range of clubs, visits and other activities. The introduction of the bilingual stream is an innovative example of creativity in the curriculum. As one parent commented, 'I am very impressed with the dedication and care that have gone into this'. This initiative has allowed the school to enrich its curriculum, extend its community provision and improve its resources. Senior leaders, however, have not yet established robust enough procedures for evaluating the impact of the bilingual stream on the school as a whole and have not convinced some parents of the benefits it will bring to all children in the school.

The school is a happy and harmonious place. Pupils feel safe and secure and enjoy lessons and other activities. Pastoral care is good. Senior leaders make good use of data and other assessment information to track the progress of pupils, but teachers do not yet make consistent enough use of this information to help pupils understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons have a crisp start and teachers explain clearly what pupils are going to learn. Positive classroom relationships give pupils the freedom to think carefully and take risks when answering questions.

The headteacher has a clear focus on raising standards and ensuring pupils do as well as they can. There is a tangible sense of determination to do better. The success of the recent drive to raise standards provides a clear indication of the school's good capacity to improve. Parents are generally positive about the school's work. A small but significant minority, however, believes that the school needs to involve them more and be more mindful of their views. Inspectors agree.

What the school should do to improve further

- * Improve communications with parents.
- * Ensure that teachers make more consistent use of assessment information to set targets and help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.
- * Monitor and evaluate the impact of the bilingual stream on the rest of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with much lower levels of knowledge and skills than are expected of most three year olds. They make a good start to their schooling and are well prepared for more formal learning when they enter Year 1. Pupils continue to achieve well in the infant and junior classes. Standards began to rise in science before they did in English and mathematics. Recent improvements in teaching, however, have closed this gap and standards in these subjects have also risen. Attainment is now broadly average in all three subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities gain the basic skills for learning and make good progress because they are supported well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Children learn to cooperate with each other in the Foundation Stage and develop positive attitudes to their learning, which are subsequently maintained across the school. Pupils enjoy school because, as one boy commented, 'it is a nice place to be'. A very small number of parents expressed concern about behaviour, but pupils told inspectors that this was not a problem because adults deal well with any incidents. Inspectors agree with the pupils and think that behaviour is good. Pupils know how to keep safe and who to ask for help. The school is working hard with parents to ensure that their children attend regularly. As a result, attendance has improved, although, despite the school's best efforts, it remains just below average. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and contribute well to the school and wider community through initiatives such as 'reading partners' and 'junior citizenship'. They are proud to represent their class on the school council and take part in a good range of activities, such as the samba club. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and appreciate the wider world of art and music. The prayers they wrote for the recent harvest festival show thoughtfulness and good spiritual development. They participate enthusiastically in sports and show a good understanding of why it is important to take part in them. They can explain which foods are good for you and enjoy the tasty and nutritious meals they eat at lunchtimes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching has improved since the last inspection. This means that most pupils now make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those learning English as an additional language, achieve well because of the good range of intervention programmes provided by teachers and learning support assistants. The school is well aware of the very small amount of teaching that is still inadequate and has acted quickly to tackle this. Teachers have worked hard to create a good climate for learning. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and want to work hard. As one boy said with enormous enthusiasm in a mathematics lesson, 'This is so much fun!'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is exciting and creative and has a positive impact on standards and on pupils' personal development. Pupils in Years 3 to 6, for example, learn judo and dance and children throughout the school have weekly French lessons. Links with the Lycée are growing and there are good enrichment opportunities such as arts week. The school is rightly proud of the introduction of the new bilingual stream but needs to establish more rigorous procedures for evaluating its impact on the school as a whole. Parents need more information on this aspect of the curriculum so that they can understand why the school has established it and what benefits it will bring to their children.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. It is clear that every child matters at Wix. Vulnerable pupils are well supported. There are good procedures for child protection. The induction of children into the Nursery and Reception is thoughtfully planned, as is the support given to those pupils who arrive later in their education. As a result, children settle quickly.

Procedures for monitoring academic achievement have improved. Good use is made of performance data to track the progress of individuals although teachers do not yet make consistent enough use of assessment information to set targets and help pupils to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and have resulted in improved standards and achievement. The school's view of its strengths and weaknesses are realistic and honest.

There are many signs of improvement, and the school is in a good position to build on them. The school has developed good procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work. The drive to improve standards is supported by subject leaders but at the moment they do not all play a rigorous enough part in checking and evaluating work in their areas. Governors are supportive and have a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There are particularly strong links with the neighbouring Lyceum, including exchange of teachers and a shared bilingual website. The school works well with a wide range of partners, including local secondary schools but needs to do more to improve communications with parents.

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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

We enjoyed visiting your school and thank you for making us both feel so welcome. It was good to chat with you and to see some of your work. We particularly enjoyed watching the samba dancing club and watching children in the Nursery make delicious and healthy fruit salad.

We agree with you that your school is good, and there are many things we like about it:

- * You make good progress in your work and you reach standards that compare with those in other schools.
- * You all get on well together, take your jobs seriously and act responsibly.
- * Your teachers teach you well. Your lessons are interesting and fun and you work hard and make good progress. You get lots of opportunities to learn exciting things like judo and French.
- * Your teachers and the other people who work in the school are friendly and you know you can talk to them if you have a problem or are upset.
- * Your behaviour is good and you work hard to make sure you do the right thing.

Although you go to a good school, we noticed a few things that we think your teachers could do now to make it even better.

You can help them with some of these things:

- * A few of your parents think that the school does not tell them what is going on or listen carefully enough to them. We have asked the school to improve this part of their work. You can help by always making sure that you give letters home straight to your parents and carers.
- * We think your teachers need to do more to help you understand exactly how to improve your work. You can help by always asking them if you do not understand what you need to do to improve your work.
- * We think the new bilingual class is very exciting and something to be proud of. But we have asked your headteacher to look carefully at how this new class affects the rest of the school so that nobody feels left out and everybody understands its good points.

Thank you once again for your help. We hope you continue to enjoy the rest of your time at Wix Primary.

Dr Lynn Bappa

Lead Inspector