



# Wendover Church of England Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 110421  
**Local Authority** Buckinghamshire  
**Inspection number** 288668  
**Inspection dates** 13–14 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Christopher Parker

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Wharf Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Wendover
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		Aylesbury HP22 6HF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01296 696822
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	346	<b>Fax number</b>	01296 696549
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jo Morley
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Andy George
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 February 2003		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The school serves an area of comparative advantage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is very small. Most come from White British backgrounds. About one in ten comes from minority ethnic groups. A very few pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English. Far fewer pupils have learning difficulties than in most schools. Attainment on entry is above average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

The quality of education is excellent. Achievement is outstanding and standards are very high. Almost all pupils reach the expected level in national tests by the end of Year 6. A very high proportion reaches the higher level in English, mathematics and science. This is because much of the teaching is of high quality.

The school's recent success is seen by many parents as the result of the, 'charismatic and enthusiastic' leadership of the headteacher. His drive, determination and very skilful management of the staff have brought what one parent described as 'amazing improvement'. By utilising their skills and abilities he has established an enthusiastic team of teachers and teaching assistants, who interest, engage, challenge and support the pupils very effectively. In addition they assiduously assess and monitor the pupils' progress. Any evidence of underachievement is investigated and action taken to ensure pupils reach the standards they should. The teachers have high expectations of what the pupils should achieve and this is reflected in the content of their work and their rapid progress. However, some are less demanding of handwriting and presentation which falls short of the high standards achieved in almost all other areas.

The curriculum is broad and provides great enjoyment and interest. Pupils have many opportunities to use and extend their literacy skills in other subjects but opportunities to use and apply their numeracy skills are not as evident or as demanding. The curriculum is enriched by an excellent range of visits and visitors to the school. Extra-curricular clubs and activities provide diverse opportunities for pupils and are extremely well attended. Participation in sport aids a healthy lifestyle for many pupils and brings individuals and teams confidence, high self-esteem and success. A third of pupils are learning to play an orchestral instrument and singing is excellent, lifting the spirits of all those who participate. Pupils also make excellent contributions to the school and wider community and develop a broad awareness of environmental issues that prepares them well for later life.

The headteacher, senior managers and governors have forged a very successful strategy to regularly and rigorously evaluate the school's performance. They listen to the views of the pupils and canvas parents' opinions. Working with the staff they analyse and prioritise where improvements are needed. The school improvement plan is the central tool for the work of the governing body influencing their spending decisions. It sets out precise actions and governors annually evaluate the impact of these strategic decisions. Many recent improvements and a very thorough and comprehensive approach to self evaluation are clear evidence of the school's very strong capacity to continue to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards of handwriting and presentation by ensuring expectations are consistently high and all teachers set a good example in their own writing.
- Provide more and challenging opportunities for pupils to use and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Since the results of national tests at the end of Year 6 dipped in 2004 there has been a marked and sustained improvement. In 2005 and 2006 results were significantly above average. In 2006 almost all pupils reached the expected level. Well over half of the pupils reached the higher level in mathematics, two thirds in English and three quarters in science. Rapid progress is evident in much of the pupils' work but the high standard of the content of their writing is not always reflected in their presentation and handwriting. Nevertheless, excellent basic skills equip pupils very well for future learning.

Achievement is outstanding. Data shows that in 2004 the rate of pupils' progress was in the bottom 10% of schools. As a result of changes and improvements made by the headteacher and teachers this position was totally reversed; in 2005 the rate of progress was in the top 10% of schools. This strong position was maintained in 2006 and sustained improvement is evident in the school's termly tracking of pupils' progress.

Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported so that they make rapid progress. The small number of pupils at the early stages of learning English have grown in confidence and made very good progress in a relatively short time in school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The pupils enjoy school greatly because they say the teachers, 'are all friendly and help you to learn in a fun way'. As a result attendance levels are well above average. Relationships are very good and lead to pupils behaving excellently and having very positive attitudes to their work. The school council represent the views of fellow pupils confidently and they feel, 'We get the pupils' views across to the teachers'. The benefits of exercise are understood by the pupils and there is a high take up of the wide range of the activities on offer. They also know the importance of a healthy diet. The pupils' contribution to the school community is very strong. Many older pupils take responsibility, for example, as buddies to Year 3 pupils helping them to settle quickly.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Spirituality and cultural understanding are strongly fostered through the art, music, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education. Pupils show a strong sense of social responsibility in their relationships with each other and their very positive attitudes to the environment.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

The teaching and learning are outstanding. Many parents commented on the 'improved' and now, 'extremely high' quality of teaching. The purpose of lessons is very clear and the teachers tell the pupils what they need to do to succeed. Tasks are well matched to the pupils' needs. The more able are challenged to ensure they continue to make rapid progress. This is particularly evident in lessons where pupils are set by ability. Teaching of the middle ability sets is also of high quality and in Year 6 results in many pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests at the end of the year. Pupils in the lower set also make very good progress with almost all reaching the expected level.

Those pupils who need extra help and those with learning difficulties are very effectively supported by skilful teaching assistants. Timely interventions, clear explanations and thoughtful support all help these pupils to do very well.

The marking of the pupils' work and assessment of their progress is thorough. Teachers make comments on pupils' work to help them to improve. They set clear targets that provide pupils with goals that they must, should and could attain.

While expectations of achievement are mostly high those for presentation and handwriting are more varied. Some teachers are not ensuring their own handwriting provides a model for the pupils.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum but links between subjects are not always exploited. However, enhancement and extension of the formal curriculum is first rate. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the outstanding range of extra activities. They talk enthusiastically about how much they learned from visits to Victorian and Tudor houses, and to a 'living rain forest'. Similarly, they are eager to describe the excitement they felt during a performance of Macbeth by a visiting theatre company.

An excellent variety of clubs enriches school life. Participation rates are very high, for example, almost all pupils attend at least one physical activity and a third are learning to play an orchestral instrument. Pupils have considerable success in inter-school sporting competitions and there is a thriving orchestra and choir. Through the eco club, pupils develop insights into conservation and they make a valuable contribution to the life of the school as they promote and organise recycling and energy saving.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pupils feel safe and secure because adults and other pupils are caring and deal with problems promptly and effectively. Procedures

for assessing and minimising risks, child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are rigorous.

Pupils of all abilities are given excellent academic guidance to ensure they reach the levels they should. This is a key factor which contributes to their excellent achievement. Teachers monitor progress very closely and set challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are given very good support by teaching assistants. The parents of one pupil wrote, '...the superb care of the class teacher, SENCo and LSA have been very rewarding for him and for us'. A pupil commented appreciatively about the work of the teaching assistants who 'are really helpful. They get you feeling more confident...'.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. The very strong leadership of the headteacher and excellent governance are the main reasons for the school's success. The headteacher has moulded a cohesive management and teaching team that share a common goal. Training, support and skilful deployment of teachers and teaching assistants have resulted in high standards and excellent achievement. Incisive self evaluation led by the chair of governors is used to constantly question the effectiveness of the school's performance. Very thorough improvement planning is at the heart of the work of governors, the senior management team, year and subject leaders. It fosters a shared drive for better provision and even higher standards.

A few parents feel their views are not acted upon but the school works exceptionally hard to canvass views. An annual survey of over 200 parents was used to determine the current priorities to improve provision for pupils with learning difficulties and those that are gifted and talented. One parent wrote, 'the school is exceptionally well led by the headteacher'. This sentiment is echoed by many others who appreciate the considerable improvements achieved in the last few years. There is high level of satisfaction among parents. They are pleased with, 'the whole package', and that 'every child has a chance to shine'.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	1
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**

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to inspectors about your school. The school provides you with an excellent education. Many of you do extremely well and reach high standards in national tests at the end of Year 6.

You behave very well in lessons and at playtimes. You told us that you enjoy lessons and feel your teachers make learning fun. The teachers expect a lot of you and you respond very well to the challenges they set. Some, but not all of you, have good handwriting and present your work carefully. We have asked the teachers to make sure you all develop good handwriting.

The teachers provide a lot of interesting opportunities for you in lessons but you do not have many chances to use the skills you learn in mathematics in other subjects. We want you to have more opportunities to use these skills to solve challenging problems in, for example, geography or science. You have many visits to places of interest and join a wide range of clubs. You are given responsibilities and meet them very well. The school council represents your views well and the older children help in the smooth running of the school.

The headteacher and governors are doing an excellent job. They are always checking to see that the school is doing as well it can to support you. The headteacher and teachers have done a lot to improve things. They want you to do your very best and have very good plans to make the school even better.

We really enjoyed being in your school and hope that in the future it is even more successful in helping you all to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Parker Lead Inspector