

# Wadhurst CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114532
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	289954
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacque Buttriss

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	330
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Fox
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Marks
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Sparrows Green Wadhurst TN5 6SR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01892 783155
<b>Fax number</b>	01892 783709

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

In this larger-than-average primary school, an average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.

## 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 which provides a good standard of education and personal development for its pupils. The school rightly prides itself on the outstanding way it supports pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and the way that all members of the school community care for each other. Achievement and standards are good throughout the school. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average. They make good progress so that at the end of the Reception year, children achieve above-average standards. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards are above average in mathematics, and well above in English and science. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to make good progress and they achieve well. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils know how to be healthy and stay safe. They clearly enjoy their education, have positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. An active school council gives pupils a strong voice in the life and work of the school. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to community events and learn skills to help them prepare well for their future lives. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, but pupils do not have enough opportunities to meet or correspond with people from other cultures in order to gain first-hand experience of their lives and traditions. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and most teachers plan work very well to meet their needs, including those of the more able as well as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, in a few classes, pupils in the average ability range are not sufficiently challenged to fulfil their potential in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The good curriculum provides a stimulating variety of enrichment opportunities to enhance pupils' learning. Care, guidance and support is a real strength of this school. It is good, with all pupils being nurtured and those with a variety of disabilities helped to access the curriculum as fully as possible. The good leadership and management of this school have resulted in the good education, high standards and strong personal development of its pupils. There have been improvements in all the key areas since the last inspection and leaders at all levels are working together to make sure that this success continues, demonstrating a good capacity to improve. The school works well with families and the great majority of parents are very supportive of what the school does for their children. Typical comments include: 'I'm very pleased with the positive impact this school is having on my children' and 'Moving my son here has been the best decision we have made in a long time'.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers plan work to match the needs of pupils of all abilities in their classes.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop a greater awareness of cultural diversity.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children come into the school with average attainment. They make good progress in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and by the time they leave the Reception class they are working at above-average standards. Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve well and reach standards well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, pupils maintain their good progress and by the time they leave this school they achieve significantly above-average standards in English and science. In mathematics, however, there was a dip in attainment in the 2006 national tests, when standards were in line with the national average. The school has

worked very hard this year to raise standards in mathematics, with the result that pupils currently in Year 6 have made very good progress and are now attaining above-average standards in mathematics. This situation is mirrored across the school, with the latest assessments showing many pupils of all ages exceeding their mathematics targets. The raising of standards in mathematics continues to be a major focus for development. Improving writing skills has also been an ongoing priority and is gradually raising standards, with new strategies such as the 'Big Writing' programme having a positive impact on pupils' work.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are alert and enthusiastic in lessons, inquisitive in their learning and are evidently happy to be at school, saying that 'lessons are fun'. Attendance is well above average, having improved since the last inspection, and behaviour is good. A strong feature is the warm and supportive relationships that pupils share. Part of the outstandingly inclusive ethos of this school is that pupils are generous in their compassion and friendship for anyone with a disability. Pupils feel safe and are aware of who to speak to if they have any concerns. They willingly take responsibility, for example, in the school council, and they energetically support charities and participate in community events. Pupils understand the need to eat healthily and exercise regularly. Physical education is prominent in the timetable and in the popular sports clubs and pupils are enthusiastic about the 'fitness trail' in the school grounds. They develop a good range of social and learning skills to prepare them for later life. Spiritual, moral and social development is good but there is insufficient emphasis on multicultural awareness.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching and learning result from teachers' high expectations of pupils' performance and the successful way they motivate pupils to achieve well and attain high standards. In many lessons, the good use of interactive whiteboards brings learning alive for pupils of all abilities. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a very good start to their school life, with good teaching and a stimulating variety of learning experiences. Teachers plan lessons well and make good use of assessment both to track pupils' progress and to help them understand how to improve their work. Teachers' marking is generally good and in some, but not all, classes gives learners a clear idea of the level they have reached and what they need to do to reach the next level. A distinctive aspect of teaching is the opportunity frequently provided for pupils to discuss tasks with each other to extend their learning. Teachers' good relationships with pupils and their good behaviour management ensure that pupils are keen to learn and stay well focused. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively together and ensure pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive very good support and make good progress. Pupils who are more able are appropriately stretched to reach higher levels. However, in a few lessons the work set does not fully meet the needs of pupils of average ability or challenge them sufficiently.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The good curriculum helps pupils to develop skills and knowledge well. The school has adopted a creative approach to curriculum planning, incorporating the pupils' own distinctive ideas, which ensures that lessons are interesting and relevant. The school has identified the need to develop this approach further to ensure a balance of academic and creative skills. There is a strong emphasis on providing a wellrounded education that includes a focus on the local environment, personal, social and health education and sport. Pupils enjoy a good range of activities outside lessons and visits to places of interest, including popular residential trips. Good links with the local secondary school provide pupils with enriched learning experiences and enable them to prepare for a smooth transition. Since the last inspection, there have been considerable improvements in both the opportunities for the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum and the confidence of staff and pupils in its application.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are a strength of the school, supporting the pupils' wellbeing, enjoyment and learning. Great emphasis is placed on ensuring the safety of pupils at all times. All security requirements are met, but the school has recognised the need to be more proactive in upgrading security checks. The lead the school takes in supporting and encouraging pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles is particularly strong. All pupils are well cared for and supported, with excellent inclusion of vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good assessment procedures ensure that pupils understand their own personal achievement targets and what they need to do to be successful. This helps them to make good progress. Pupils are encouraged to develop independent and group learning skills, as shown when some Year 6 gifted and talented pupils produced a very good 'Children's Prospectus' for new pupils to support their induction into the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good at all levels. Strong teamwork is a feature throughout the school and ensures that there is real continuity in the drive for school improvement. The leadership team makes good use of pupil performance data to identify weaknesses and successfully develop strategies to remedy them. An example of this is the way in which all staff have worked very hard this year to raise standards in mathematics across the school. This has already resulted in improved progress, with many pupils exceeding their targets. All key issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Attendance has been raised to well above the national average in the past year, which is a remarkable achievement. The school's robust monitoring and self-evaluation processes lead to the formulation of a comprehensive school improvement plan which provides a very good framework for driving the school forward. However, the school's assessment of its performance is unduly modest. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good so that children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy a very good start to their education. The governing body provides good levels of support and challenge for the school and governors undertake their monitoring roles very effectively.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<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>	2

<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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
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

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

19 June 2007 Dear Children, Inspection of Wadhurst C of E Primary School, Wadhurst, East Sussex TN5 6SR Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we came to inspect your school. You made us feel very welcome and we enjoyed talking with you. Yours is a good school that helps you to do well in your work and cares for you all very well. These are the things we liked best about your school: Your behaviour is good and you show great care for each other. The headteacher, teachers and staff all work very hard to give you a good education, full of interesting opportunities and challenges which help you to enjoy your education and achieve well. You have told us that your teachers 'make lessons fun' for you and help you to reach high standards in your work. You are helped to make good choices about staying safe and keeping healthy and you are prepared well for your future lives. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a bright and lively learning environment and are benefiting from a very good start to their education. These are the things we think your school could do better: While most teachers give all their pupils challenging work to do, a few teachers could adapt their planning to make sure they set levels of work that suit all your different abilities and help you all to do your best. The school should make sure that you have more opportunities to learn about other cultures. You can help too by continuing to work hard and do your best. We would like to wish you lots of success in your future education. With very best wishes, Jacquie Buttriss Lead Inspector