



Wix and Wrabness Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114739
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290015
Inspection dates 28–29 September 2006
Reporting inspector Cheryl Thompson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Colchester Road Wix, Wix Manningtree, Essex CO11 2RS
School category	Community	Telephone number	01255 870282
Age range of pupils	4–11	Fax number	01255 870282
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair	Mr Brian Harmer
Number on roll (school)	91	Headteacher	Mr Mark Carter-Tufnell
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous school inspection	25 October 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 28–29 September 2006	Inspection number 290015
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Wix and Wrabness Primary is a small school serving the local villages and beyond. Two fifths of the children live out of the school's catchment area. The numbers of children eligible for free school meals and who have learning difficulties or disabilities are much lower than those found nationally. When they start school, children's personal development is much better than expected for their age but in the areas of literacy and numeracy, skills are generally below those usually found.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school was correct when it judged its effectiveness as satisfactory. It provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has some considerable strengths. It provides satisfactory value for money. In this small school pupils are cared for well. They say they love coming to school and this is endorsed overwhelmingly by parents. One parent wrote, 'My son is inspired by school'. Pupils' personal development is good. Their excellent behaviour means that they work and play together in a calm and harmonious school. Pupils are positive about learning. They develop adequate skills in literacy and numeracy for their future economic well-being. Through a good programme of personal, social and health education, pupils develop a good idea of how to stay safe and eat a healthy diet. The school provides an interesting range of visits and visitors to enliven lessons and the wide range of clubs and very good opportunities for inter-school competitive sports have a positive effect on their fitness and personal development. Although the curriculum is satisfactory, there is a lack of continuity in the way reading, spelling and handwriting are taught as pupils move through the school. This has an impact on standards, especially in writing. Standards in national tests and assessments are broadly average but are below average in writing. The school has been through a period of instability in the recent past with a change of half the teaching staff as well as the arrival of a new headteacher. As a result, some pupils have not made the progress they should, especially in the two older classes. The school is now in a sound position to move forward because the headteacher is giving strong leadership based on good self-evaluation. This provides a clear picture of what needs to be done to improve the school further. The capacity for further improvement is satisfactory. As one parent wrote, 'The school has made a large number of improvements since the new head took over...'. The improvement that has had the most impact is the use of a comprehensive system for keeping track of pupils' progress. This system shows very clearly that achievement is now satisfactory and standards are broadly average by Year 6. However, there are weaknesses in the progress of some Reception and Year 1 pupils. This is because these are not stretched enough and not taught their letter sounds efficiently. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. These are outstanding in Year 2 because brisk teaching is matched very closely to pupils' abilities. Excellent relationships and high expectations mean that pupils try really hard to please their teacher and work at a good rate. Overall, the use of assessment to plan work to suit all pupils' abilities is not consistent, especially for those who are more able. In some lessons pupils are not expected to work at a fast enough rate. The provision for Reception children is satisfactory. Because they have very well developed social skills they cope very well in the mixed age class and make satisfactory progress. However, not enough account is taken of the particular weaknesses in literacy and numeracy skills identified in the end of Reception profiles.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise achievement and standards, particularly in writing, by: - Making better use of assessment to plan work to match pupils' abilities, especially the more able. - Setting higher expectations for rate of work by pupils. - Ensuring continuity in the way reading,

spelling and handwriting are taught. - Improving the teaching of phonics (letter sounds) for Reception and Year 1. - Ensuring that planning for the future takes greater account of children's weakness in literacy and numeracy identified in end of Reception profiles.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. The school has had a reputation for very high standards in Year 6 national tests but the significant turnover of staff has had an adverse impact on the 2006 Year 6 standards. The targets set for attainment in English were not met. Though standards were broadly average, some of the pupils had not achieved as well as they should and, because of a weak budget situation, the 'booster' lessons were not held which exacerbated the lowering of standards. Children start in Reception with high levels of social skills and independence. These high levels mask the fact many have lower than expected literacy and numeracy skills. Data show that in the past four years, children have made good progress to the end of Year 2 and attained average standards in national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that Reception and Year 1 pupils are making satisfactory progress and in Year 2, they make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is excellent in the areas of moral and social development and satisfactory in cultural development. Pupils' excellent behaviour has a very positive impact on the school ethos. For example, dinner times are a friendly and sociable occasion. School council members take their roles seriously and act responsibly in seeking their class's views and presenting them to staff. Older pupils contribute to the local community by organising stalls at school sales and dancing at the village fete as well as organising school sponsorship for charitable causes such as 'Children in Need'. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyles and stay safe through a good programme of personal, social and health education and a good range of visits and visitors. Pupils demonstrate their knowledge of healthy eating by choosing a well balanced meal at dinnertimes. Currently, attendance is average. Occasionally, it is adversely affected by families taking holidays in school time. The school is working very hard to promote good attendance by letting parents know how holidays in term time affect their child's education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and excellent in Year 2. In all classes, relationships between teachers and their pupils are very good. Except in Year 2, these relationships are not being exploited to set high expectations for a good work rate. In the past year, teachers have started to make better use of assessment and the tracking of progress to adapt their planning, but there is still some way to go to make sure more able pupils, consistently, have work to stretch them. There is also a lack of consistency in the amount of help available for pupils with identified learning difficulties. A few who have been identified as needing to read and practise spelling every day are not able to do this because there is not always enough support available.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with a good range of clubs and sports opportunities. The good range of visits and visitors helps draw subjects such as history and geography together to make learning interesting and relevant. Not enough is done to exploit and formalise opportunities to link writing to other subjects, for example writing accounts in science. The school has suitable plans to address this.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides good care for its pupils. All are known very well so that any signs of unhappiness are quickly noted and dealt with. Parents speak highly of the care and support provided for their child and themselves. Pupils are totally confident that someone will help them should they be worried. Suitable child protection procedures are in place and the necessary checks on all adults to safeguard children have been carried out. The academic guidance provided is satisfactory and improving. The strong links between the on-site pre-school facility ensure a smooth transition to Reception.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides good leadership and management. The reason that leadership and management of the school are judged to be satisfactory rather than good is that the deputy headteacher and the governors are at the stage of developing their roles. Under the headteacher's guidance, they are doing so effectively and are beginning to have an impact on school improvement. Since the headteacher's appointment in September 2005, much has been achieved, including reducing the significant budget deficit. School improvement planning is good because it is based on good

self-evaluation which provides a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors ensure the school meets its statutory obligations and are much better informed about what goes on in school. They have yet to develop their understanding of the data available about the school's performance so that they can question if it can do better.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

2 October 2006 Dear Children Wix and Wrabness Primary School, Colchester Road, Wix, Manningtree, Essex, CO11 2RS Thank you for welcoming me to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I enjoyed having lunch with you and talking to the school council. I was pleased to hear that you enjoy school, going to the clubs and taking part in the sports competitions. You have learned a lot about the right sort of foods to eat and that exercise is important. I was really impressed with your excellent behaviour and how you help each other. I am writing to tell you what I found out about your school. - You and your parents think it's wonderful! - You are making satisfactory progress as you move through the school but some of you could do even better if you had harder work and worked more quickly in lessons. Your headteacher is doing a good job running the school and I have asked him to do a few things to make it even better. - To make sure you improve your writing. - To make sure teachers expect you to work at a good rate and give you work to make you think hard. - To make sure all the teachers teach spelling, reading and handwriting in a way that helps you make good progress in writing. - To make sure children in Reception and Year 1 get good teaching about letter sounds. Thank you again for your helpfulness. All good wishes Cheryl Thompson Lead inspector