

# Wiveliscombe Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123713
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	292756
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 April 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Diane Wilkinson

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	242
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brian Collingridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	A M J Halstead
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 April 2002
<b>School address</b>	North Street Wiveliscombe Taunton TA4 2LA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01984 623325
<b>Fax number</b>	01984 623534

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Wiveliscombe is an average-sized primary school in which some classes have more than one year group. A small number of pupils come from European backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award and Football Association Charter Mark and has close links with a number of overseas schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Wiveliscombe is a good school and provides good value for money. In the last few years there has been a very high turnover of staff and lengthy staff absences, including at management level. This, together with the fluctuating numbers in year groups, has made it extremely difficult for the school to provide continuity and consistency in pupils' education. However, the determination of governors and the senior leadership team, together with the very strong leadership of the headteacher, has ensured that the school has overcome these difficulties and has successfully addressed weaker aspects in pupils' achievement. Judicious new appointments and reorganisation of classes have led to improvements in the quality of education. An effective staff team has been created and all make an important contribution to school development. Governors support the school well; for example, financial resources have been used exceptionally well to improve the accommodation. Leadership and management at all levels are good, although some subject and phase leaders are new to their role and the full effect of their work has yet to be seen. The school is well placed to improve further.

The school has an accurate and comprehensive view of how well it is doing. This is the result of the very effective system in place to use information from the assessment of pupils' progress and evaluation of the quality of provision to pinpoint weaknesses and refine both curriculum planning and teaching and learning. Although the full effect of this has yet to be seen, the curriculum is much improved and is outstanding. It is broad, rich and stimulating and provides exceptionally well for pupils' needs and interests so that they become enthusiastic about school and want to learn. Excellent links with other schools, including overseas, provide pupils with a wealth of very good quality experiences. Resources are good and help pupils to learn more easily, although the lack of a library limits their opportunities for using books to find out things for themselves. Staff teams have been set up to ensure there is a consistent approach to teaching and learning across the school and to support new colleagues. As a result, teaching and learning are good in all classes. Strong features of teaching are the well-planned lessons with challenging activities which help pupils do well and the very effective marking which encourages pupils to improve. However, although pupils generally work hard, some activities go on for too long, which results in pupils losing interest and limits their progress.

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school and continues to improve. When children enter Reception, standards are around those expected, although lower than this in some key language skills. The quality of provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. By the time children enter Year 1, standards are slightly above expectations. Although standards in Years 2 and 6 have dipped in some years where the pupils have had an exceptionally high number of teachers, they are generally above average and are well placed to remain so. Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well, are friendly, polite and helpful and the school is a happy and harmonious place to be. Pupils enjoy school very much and work hard even when they find tasks difficult because they say teachers help them to do well. Care, support and guidance are good. Good attention is paid to pupils' safety and they receive good advice and support to help them improve in both their personal and academic development. A particularly notable feature is that pupils' new academic targets are especially well chosen to help them improve the weaker aspects of their work. These, together with the regular checks on how well pupils are doing, are already bringing about improved progress, although the full effect has yet to be seen.

## What the school should do to improve further

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- Make sure that the good pace of lessons is maintained throughout all learning activities.
- Set up a school library to allow older pupils greater opportunities for selecting and using books to find out information and to develop study skills.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Throughout the school pupils make good progress. Effective support means that pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities or who speak English as an additional language make the same good progress as their classmates. A good proportion of these pupils reach average standards.

Attainment on entry to Reception is around that usually found, although lower than this in some early literacy skills. Progress is good and standards on entry to Year 1 are slightly above average. Children do especially well in their personal and literacy development.

Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 dipped last year as these classes had been significantly affected by staff changes, which slowed the rate of progress. However, current strategies to improve aspects of reading, writing and number work are helping standards to rise. At the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been above average in the last few years. Although they were broadly average last year, current Year 2 standards are close to those seen in previous years. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen to the same good standard seen in 2005 and are now above average in English, mathematics and science

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is especially strong because pupils are given many opportunities to reflect on, and respond to, significant issues that could affect their lives. Through a wealth of activities, including art and music, pupils gain a good understanding of their own and other cultures. Pupils' good behaviour and relationships make a significant contribution to the calm and happy atmosphere of the school. Parents know their children feel secure and well cared for; typically, one wrote, 'This is a friendly and happy school.' Pupils say 'Rules keep you safe', and they enjoy coming to school. They are also knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe, for example, when walking on the narrow roads. Attendance is around average because of a small number of irregular attenders. Pupils' understanding of the advantages of a healthy diet and physical activity is good, although they do not always make healthy choices in their packed lunches. Through the work of the school council pupils make an effective contribution to the school community and in supporting charities. Pupils are well prepared for their future life through the good progress they make in their literacy and numeracy skills and in their ability to work well together.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school. As one parent wrote, 'We feel fortunate that every teacher my children have had has been supportive and enthusiastic and engendered a super attitude to learning.' Accurate assessment of pupils' previous learning is used effectively to help ensure lesson activities are well planned. Children in Reception have a very good mix of activities where adults explain things to them and those where they can investigate and find out things for themselves. In all classes pupils are provided with challenging tasks well matched to the stage at which they are working. This, together with pupils' good behaviour in lessons and enthusiasm for learning, helps them to make good progress. The quality of marking is exceptionally good and has been instrumental in improving progress, particularly in the older classes. Pupils generally work at a good rate throughout lessons, although sometimes teachers allow activities to go on for too long so that pupils become restless and lose concentration, slowing the rate of learning.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

An especially strong feature is that planning is very effectively based on the school's assessment of how well pupils are doing, so that weaknesses are being accurately targeted and speedily addressed. For example, activities to improve handwriting and spelling and multiplication skills are helping to improve pupils' progress in English and mathematics. The exceptionally good links between subjects provide pupils with many opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum has been especially well adjusted to allow for fluctuating class sizes and staff changes, as is seen in the setting arrangements in Years 3 and 4 which are helping to bring about good progress in mathematics. Excellent activities and exceptionally good quality teaching and coaching in music and physical education are bringing about high standards in these subjects. The effective personal, social and health education programme ensures pupils make good progress in these aspects. A wealth of extra activities in clubs, visits and visitors to the school make a major contribution to pupils' progress and enjoyment of school.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Staff are vigilant about the well-being of pupils. Rigorous and regular health and safety checks together with robust systems for child protection and the vetting of staff means that pupils are well cared for at all times. Pupils are well supported because the school has a good knowledge of the needs and circumstances of individual pupils and they receive good guidance for both their personal and academic development. Very good links with other agencies support pupils' specific needs well. A strong feature is the involvement of families in addressing any personal needs individual pupils may have, which has resulted in the recent appointment of a family liaison officer.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school has benefited from the very strong leadership of the headteacher and the effective support of senior leaders and governors. Together they have successfully brought the school through a period of uncertainty and have improved the quality of provision and raised standards. Well judged new appointments have created a strong staff team which is firmly focused on improving provision and is working effectively to do so. A particular strength is that subject and phase leaders are effectively supported by staff teams which are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. Self-evaluation is thorough, comprehensive and accurate so that weaknesses in pupils' achievement are speedily identified and addressed. The school is well placed to improve further.

Inevitably, the high turnover of staff has meant that some subject leaders are new to their post and the full effect of their work has yet to be seen. However, where they have been in post for several years, for example, in mathematics, there is clear evidence of rapid improvement in pupils' progress. The governing body offers strong support and is fully involved in school development. Strategic planning is good and ensures that all resources are deployed well. In particular, good forward planning has led to staffing difficulties being resolved effectively and planning provides for the re-establishment of a library since the new building.

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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	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

<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>	1
<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

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26 April 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wiveliscombe Primary School, Wiveliscombe, Somerset TL4 2LA

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We were impressed by how well you behave and get on with each other and how friendly and helpful you are to visitors. I particularly want to thank the school council who gave up their lunch time to speak with us. You and your parents think your school is good and we agree with you.

This is what we thought was good about the school:

- You are making good progress and standards are above average.
- You make good progress in your personal development. You enjoy school and feel safe and happy there because staff take good care of you and children get on well with each other and behave well.
- The curriculum is excellent. It is very well planned and interesting and helps you to do well in your work and enjoy school. The many extra activities you have such as in sport and music are especially good.
- You told us that you don't always find learning easy, but that teachers help you to do your best. We agree, and teaching is good in all classes.
- Staff keep a good check on how well you are doing so they can give you good advice on how to improve.
- You have a very good headteacher and he is well supported by staff and governors in helping your school to get even better.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Make sure that lesson activities don't go on for too long so that you can keep working hard all the time and don't lose concentration.
- Set up a school library so that you can regularly use books to help find out information and research topics.

Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

D Wilkinson Lead Inspector