

Wyton on the Hill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110703
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	310396
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Roderick Passant

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mal Fenton
Headteacher	Ms Jane Thorley
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2004
School address	Cambridge Square Wyton-on-the-Hill Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE28 2JB
Telephone number	01480 452032
Fax number	01480 451004

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is about the same as in most schools. A small number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils requiring additional help with their learning is less than seen nationally, but more pupils have statements detailing their special educational need. The school draws from a community that is undergoing significant change. The majority of pupils come from service families and have had a disrupted education, although numbers of these pupils are falling as the RAF station reduces in size. Sale of Ministry of Defence housing means that the intake is more diverse and there is a growing number of families with significant social needs. The majority of children join Reception having had some pre-school experiences. Children join the school with a full range of skills and abilities but overall literacy and numeracy skills are lower than generally seen. A growing number of pupils who join the school have additional literacy and numeracy needs.

The key characteristic of the school is the number of pupils who join or leave the school at various points in their career. In 2007, nearly half the school joined it after Year 2 and a quarter joined in Year 5 or Year 6. Most children who enter Reception stay on to the end of Key Stage 1.

The school has Investors in People (IIP) status, and Active Mark for its work in physical education and games.

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 with significant strengths. Pupils make good progress, achieve well and attain standards by the end of Year 6 that are broadly average. Pupils' personal development is good. Most parents' questionnaires were positive about all aspects of the school. Staff view pupils as individuals who matter; they show them considerable respect, and provide them with very high levels of care and support. These principles underpin the school's work and account for why it successfully manages the very high turnover of pupils. This coherent approach stems directly from the headteacher's outstanding leadership. She has effectively structured strong teamwork, shared values and staff commitment towards pupils leading to good overall leadership and management. Staff know pupils' needs well, listen to pupils carefully, are punctilious in the kindly courtesy they show and model good language and social skills. The result is that the school is warm and welcoming and has a calm ethos that provides pupils with a strong sense of stability and security. The fact that pupils feel very safe in school and trust the staff to help them to solve any problems stems from the very good relationships between staff and pupils and is an important ingredient in their good learning.

Staff are one strength, the pupils are another. They are very positive in the way that they welcome newcomers and absorb them into existing friendships. Pupils get on well with each other most of the time and are confident that staff will sort out occasional incidents. Because adults use praise and positive strategies consistently and effectively, behaviour is good. Most pupils behave extremely well for most of the time because they have learned self-discipline. Playtimes are happy events, underpinned by unobtrusive careful planning - like so many aspects of the school's working. Effectively implemented behaviour plans help improve the behaviour of those few pupils who find it difficult to behave well.

Pupils enjoy school and learning a great deal, because teaching is good and the school has worked hard to make the curriculum interesting, while maintaining a focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Well planned lessons, often asking pupils to consider intrinsically intriguing problems, effectively hook their interest. Teachers' marking is improving and is helping pupils learn more effectively but the quality of marking and pupils' responses is not yet consistent. The school tracks pupils' progress carefully and teachers are diligent in their assessment. The school is, however, so rich in assessment data that its complexity sometimes blurs key messages and limits its effective use by all staff to gain even sharper insights into the quality of the school's provision.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Reception class is outstanding and as a result, the children reach a good level of overall achievement by the end of Foundation Stage. The classroom is exciting and children enjoy a range of interesting activities in each of the six areas of learning. Teaching is first class. Adults are enthusiastic and stimulating and contribute well to the very good progress that children make. Assessment and planning are strong and the curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of the children. High expectations by all staff and good relationships with the children mean that there is a calm and harmonious atmosphere in which to play, work and learn. There are well-developed links with parents. The outdoor area, although small, has a good range of resources and equipment that interests the children. The strong emphasis placed on developing children's personal and social skills means that they behave well and quickly become independent

learners. Children already show consideration for each other's feelings. When a child mistakenly picked up a pair of left-handed scissors, his partner said 'That's ok, we all do things that are wrong.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that tracking data is manageable and staff can understand and use it effectively.
- Ensure that marking of work and pupils' response is of consistent high quality across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and make good progress against their starting points. Children get a flying start to their education in the Foundation Stage. They continue to make good progress during the infant phase. Overall standards at the end of Year 2 have been above average in recent years. The current progress of Year 2 is good. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress but the numbers of pupils joining or leaving the school affects the overall standards by Year 6 which are broadly average and have been for some time. Year 6 pupils are currently making good progress towards their targets.

The longer the pupils have attended the school the higher the level of overall attainment, particularly in the percentage of pupils gaining the higher level 5. Attainment in mathematics generally lags behind English and science, particularly in the percentage of pupils gaining level 5 and this is a focus in the school improvement plan. Pupils who find learning more difficult make good progress, as do the small number learning English as an additional language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school fosters pupils' self-confidence well and pupils develop good social skills. There have been no racist incidents. Pupils have a good understanding of what makes a healthy life-style and how to keep themselves safe on the internet and elsewhere. They make positive contributions to the school as a community through the school council and their various responsibilities, such as play-leaders and monitors. Given pupils' good achievement and personal development and positive attitudes to learning, the school prepares them well for their next steps in their education. Attendance is broadly average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have a good rapport with their pupils and pupils engage in their work with zest and good humour. Classrooms are attractive and stimulating. Well-planned lessons meet individual pupil's needs. Teachers confidently use the interactive white boards to good effect. In the best lessons, teachers effectively stimulate pupils' interest and motivation in the problem under consideration, engage them practically and creatively and skilfully lead them towards the solution. Teachers often bring the class back together during the course of the lesson to check on pupils' understanding. Questioning is effective. There is good teamwork with teaching assistants and they provide effective support to individuals and groups. Where lessons are a

little weaker - although always competent - pupils are allowed to assume a more passive role. The school has carried out a lot of work in using assessment to foster pupils' learning. Marking and pupils' responses to it have improved but the quality is not yet consistent across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a good balanced range of activities. There has been a long-standing emphasis on personal and social education, which helps the pupils form respectful and caring relationships with each other. A new personal, social and health education programme, reinforced during assemblies and by team targets, is in the process of being introduced. Meaningful discussions and debate in lessons are common features because pupils are able to listen to each other's point of view. There are many opportunities for writing in different styles. The school has linked subjects together to make the work meaningful and interesting and is developing this further. There is a good range of enrichment and extra curricular activities, including sport. These have a positive effect on pupils' personal and social development as well as their understanding of healthy living. The school has improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT) with interactive white boards in each classroom and new laptops.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are highly valued as individuals and the school also establishes quickly a very strong sense of community and belonging. Excellent induction and exit procedures, which are both pragmatic and sensitive, help pupils settle quickly and they appreciate this. The school assesses individual needs early and as a result, there is extremely well planned provision for pupils who need additional support and they make good progress against their targets as a result. The school works very well with other agencies. Rigorous systems for safeguarding, health and safety, risk assessments and child protection procedures are in place. The school makes extremely effective use of support staff. The school has extremely thorough systems in place for tracking the achievement and progress of pupils and collects a great deal of data as a result. Targets help pupils understand well what it is they have to do next in order to improve and are shared with parents at consultation meetings twice yearly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The deputy headteacher works closely with the headteacher and provides her with good support. Subject coordination is effective. Performance management is used well to help improve standards and achievement and to identify training needs for staff. School self-evaluation is detailed and accurate. However, not all staff make the best use of the information on pupil's progress because of the amount and complexity of the data collected. School improvement planning is detailed and the school's evident improvement since the last inspection indicates a good track record and good capacity to improve further. Governance is satisfactory. It has strengths, and a committed core of governors provide appropriate challenge and support. However, the turnover of governors limits the depth of governor experience and the utilisation of the training that many governors take up. Currently, there is an almost full complement of governors.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	1

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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

21 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Wyton on the Hill Community Primary School, Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE28 2JB

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school. My particular thanks to those members of the School Council and Year 6 children who gave up part of their lunch hour to talk to us. What you had to say was very helpful.

This is a good school and you are right to be proud of it. It helps you develop as young people well and you make good progress in your work. You clearly feel safe in school and you get on with each other well. It was good to hear that you are confident to approach an adult if you are troubled over something. You are well behaved. I think Ms Thorley leads the school extremely well because she has established a great team of staff. Adults care about you a very great deal and provide you with excellent support not only when pupils first arrive but throughout your time at the school. Teachers help you to make good progress because they create interesting lessons. I agree with those pupils who said they like school because it is interesting. Teachers keep a close eye on your progress but this results in a lot of information, which is not always easy to understand. One of the things I have asked Ms Thorley to do is to find a way of simplifying the information so that it can be used more effectively. Teachers have recently improved their marking and are asking you to make changes to your work because of what they suggest. Marking like this is not in use in all classrooms so Ms Thorley is going to try to ensure that everyone is marking in the same way.

One of the important things about the school is that it is always trying to get better. Another is that it changes constantly because so many children come and go. You really help the school because it is impressive how welcoming and friendly you are to new children and how hard you work to involve them as soon as they arrive.

All good wishes in your future school career.

Roderick Passant

Lead inspector